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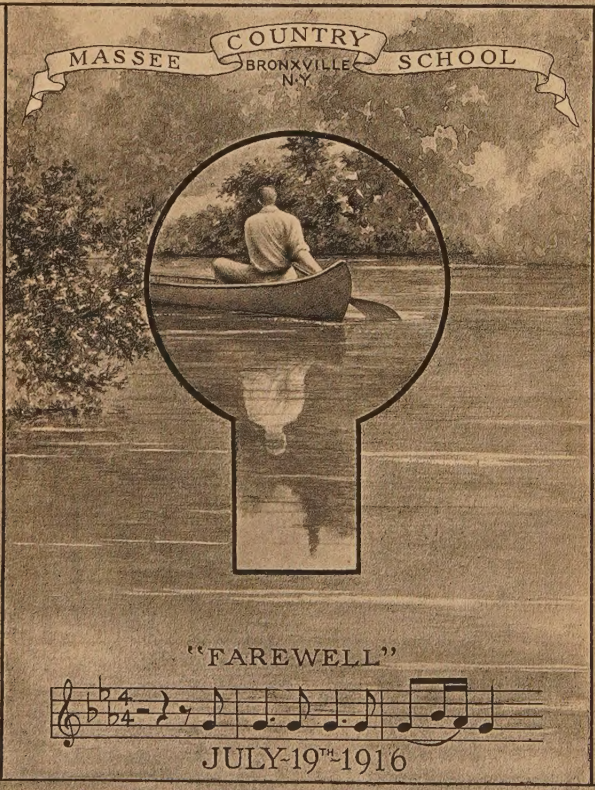

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LIFE AND VOYAGES OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AND THE VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES OF THE COMPANIONS OF COLUMBUS WITH APPENDIX AND INDEX

Knickerbocker Edition

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LIFE AND VOYAGES OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING

VOLUME 5

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON

14,772

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The Knickerbocker Press, New York

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VASCO NUÑEZ DE BALBOA,

DISCOVERER OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

(*Continued.*)

VASCO NUÑEZ DE BALBOA,

DISCOVERER OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

Chapter XXIII.

EXPEDITION OF MORALES AND PIZARRO TO THE SHORES OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN—THEIR VISIT TO THE PEARL ISLANDS—THEIR DISASTROUS RETURN ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS.

THE Bishop of Darien, encouraged by the success of his intercession, endeavored to persuade the Governor to permit the departure of Vasco Nuñez on his expedition to the South Sea. The jealousy of Pedrarias, however, was too strong to allow him to listen to such counsel. He was aware of the importance of the expedition, and was anxious that the Pearl Islands should be ex-

plored, which promised such abundant treasures; but he feared to increase the popularity of Vasco Nuñez, by adding such an enterprise to the number of his achievements. Pedrarias therefore set on foot an expedition, consisting of sixty men, but gave the command to one of his own relations, named Gaspar Morales. The latter was accompanied by Francisco Pizarro, who had already been to those parts in the train of Vasco Nuñez, and who soon rose to importance in the present enterprise by his fierce courage and domineering genius.

A brief notice of the principal incidents of this expedition is all that is necessary for the present narration.

Morales and Pizarro traversed the mountains of the isthmus by a shorter and more expeditious route than that which had been taken by Vasco Nuñez, and arrived on the shores of the South Sea at the territories of a cacique named Tutibrà, by whom they were amicably entertained. Their great object was to visit the Pearl Islands. The cacique, however, had but four canoes, which were insufficient to contain their whole party. One half of their number, therefore, remained at the village of Tutibrà, under the command of a captain named Peñalosa; the residue embarked in the canoes with Morales and Pizarro. After a stormy and peril-

ous voyage, they landed on one of the smaller islands, where they had some skirmishing with the natives, and thence made their way to the principal island of the archipelago, to which, from the report of its great pearl fishery, Vasco Nuñez had given the name of Isla Rica.

The cacique of this island had long been the terror of the neighboring coasts, invading the mainland with fleets of canoes, and carrying the inhabitants into captivity. His reception of the Spaniards was worthy of his fame. Four times did he sally forth to defend his territory, and as often was he repulsed by great slaughter. His warriors were overwhelmed with terror at the fire-arms of the Spaniards, and at their ferocious bloodhounds. Finding all resistance unavailing, the cacique was at length compelled to sue for peace. His prayers being granted he received the conquerors into his habitation, which was well built and of immense size. Here he brought them as a peace-offering a basket curiously wrought and filled with pearls of great beauty. Among these were two of extraordinary size and value. One weighed twenty-five carats; the other was of the size of a Muscadine pear, weighing upwards of three drachms, and of oriental color and lustre. The cacique considered himself more than repaid by a present of hatchets, beads,

and hawks'-bells; and on the Spaniards smiling at his joy, observed: "These things I can turn to useful purpose, but of what value are those pearls to me?"

Finding, however, that these baubles were precious in the eyes of the Spaniards, he took Morales and Pizarro to the summit of a wooden tower, commanding an unbounded prospect. "Behold before you," said he, "the infinite sea, which extends even beyond the sunbeams. As to these islands which lie to the right and left, they are all subject to my sway. They possess but little gold, but the deep places of the sea around them are full of pearls. Continue to be my friends, and you shall have as many as you desire; for I value your friendship more than pearls, and as far as in me lies will never forfeit it."

He then pointed to the mainland, where it stretched away toward the east, mountain, beyond mountain, until the summit of the last faded in the distance, and was scarcely seen above the watery horizon. In that direction, he said, there lay a vast country of inexhaustible riches, inhabited by a mighty nation. He went on to repeat the vague but wonderful rumors which the Spaniards had frequently heard about the great kingdom of Peru. Pizarro listened greedily to his words, and while

his eye followed the finger of the cacique, as it ranged along the line of shadowy coast, his daring mind kindled with the thought of seeking this golden empire beyond the waters.*

Before leaving the island, the two captains impressed the cacique with so great an idea of the power of the King of Castile, that he agreed to become his vassal, and to render him an annual tribute of one hundred pounds' weight of pearls.

The party having returned in safety to the mainland, though to a different place from that where they had embarked, Gaspar Morales sent his relation, Bernardo Morales, with ten men in quest of Peñalosa and his companions, who had remained in the village of Tutibrà.

Unfortunately for the Spaniards, during the absence of the commanders this Peñalosa had so exasperated the natives by his misconduct, that a conspiracy had been formed by the caciques along the coast to massacre the whole of the strangers, when the party should return from the islands.

Bernardo Morales and his companions, on their way in quest of Peñalosa, put up for the night in the village of a cacique named Chuchamà, who was one of the conspirators. They

* Herrera, decad. ii., lib. i., cap. 4. Peter Martyr, decad. iii., cap. 10.

were entertained with pretended hospitality. In the dead of the night, however, the house in which they were sleeping was wrapped in flames, and most of them were destroyed. Chuchamà then prepared with his confederates to attack the main body of the Spaniards who remained with Morales and Pizarro.

Fortunately for the latter, there was among the Indians who had accompanied them to the islands a cacique named Chirucà, who was in secret correspondence with the conspirators. Some circumstances in his conduct excited their suspicions; they put him to the torture, and drew from him a relation of the massacre of their companions, and of the attack with which they were menaced.

Morales and Pizarro were at first appalled by the overwhelming danger which surrounded them. Concealing their agitation, however, they compelled Chirucà to send a message to each of the confederate caciques inviting him to a secret conference, under pretence of giving him important information. The caciques came at the summons. They were thus taken one by one to the number of eighteen, and put in chains. Just at this juncture Peñalosa arrived with the thirty men who had remained with him at Tutibrà. Their arrival was hailed with joy by their comrades, who had given them up

for lost. Encouraged by this unexpected reinforcement, the Spaniards now attacked by surprise the main body of confederate Indians, who, being ignorant of the discovery of their plot and capture of their caciques, were awaiting the return of the latter in a state of negligent security.

Pizarro led the van, and set upon the enemy at daybreak, with the old Spanish war-cry of Santiago! It was a slaughter rather than a battle, for the Indians were unprepared for resistance. Before sunrise seven hundred lay dead upon the field. Returning from the massacre, the commanders doomed the caciques who were in chains to be torn by bloodhounds; nor was even Chirucà spared from this sanguinary sentence. Notwithstanding this bloody revenge, the vindictive spirit of the commanders was still unappeased, and they set off to surprise the village of a cacique named Birù, who dwelt on the eastern side of the gulf of St. Michael. He was famed for valor and for cruelty; his dwelling was surrounded by the weapons and other trophies of those whom he had vanquished; and he was said never to give quarter.

The Spaniards assailed his village with fire and sword, and made dreadful havoc. Birù escaped from his burning habitation, rallied his

people, kept up a galling fight throughout the greater part of that day, and handled the Spaniards so roughly, that when he drew off at night, they did not venture to pursue him, but returned right gladly from his territory. According to some of the Spanish writers, the kingdom of Peru derived its name from this warlike cacique, through a blunder of the early discoverers; the assertion, however, is believed to be erroneous.

The Spaniards had pushed their bloody revenge to an extreme and were now doomed to suffer from the recoil. In the fury of their passions, they had forgotten that they were but a handful of men surrounded by savage nations. Returning wearied and disheartened from the battle with Birù, they were waylaid and assaulted by a host of Indians led on by the son of Chirucà. A javelin from his hand pierced one of the Spaniards through the breast, and came out between the shoulders; several others were wounded, and the remainder were harassed by a galling fire kept up from among the rocks and bushes.

Dismayed at the implacable vengeance they had aroused, the Spaniards hastened to abandon these hostile shores, and make the best of their way back to Darien. The Indians, however, were not to be appeased by the mere departure

of the intruders. They followed perseveringly for seven days, hanging on their skirts and harassing them by continual alarms. Morales and Pizarro, seeing the obstinacy of their pursuit, endeavored to gain a march upon them by stratagem. Making large fires, as usual, one night about the place of their encampment, they left them burning to deceive the enemy, while they made a rapid retreat. Among their number was one poor fellow named Velasquez, who was so grievously wounded that he could not walk. Unable to accompany his countrymen in their flight, and dreading to fall into the merciless hands of the savages, he determined to hang himself, nor could the prayers and even tears of his comrades dissuade him from his purpose.

The stratagem of the Spaniards, however, was unavailing. Their retreat was perceived, and at daybreak, to their dismay they found themselves surrounded by three squadrons of savages. Unable, in their haggard state, to make head against so many foes, they remained drawn up all day on the defensive, some watching, while others reposed. At night they lit their fires and again attempted to make a secret retreat. The Indians, however, were as usual on their traces, and wounded several with arrows. Thus pressed and goaded, the Spaniards

became desperate, and fought like madmen, rushing upon the very darts of the enemy.

Morales now resorted to an inhuman and fruitless expedient to retard his pursuers. He caused several Indian prisoners to be slain, hoping that their friends would stop to lament over them; but the sight of their mangled bodies only increased the fury of the savages and the obstinacy of their pursuit.

For nine days were the Spaniards hunted in this manner about the woods and mountains, the swamps and fens, wandering they knew not whither, and returning upon their steps, until, to their dismay, they found themselves in the very place where, several days previously, they had been surrounded by three squadrons.

Many now despaired of ever escaping with life from this trackless wilderness, thus teeming with deadly foes. It was with difficulty their commanders could rally their spirits, and encourage them to persevere. Entering a thick forest, they were again assailed by a band of Indians, but despair and fury gave them strength; they fought like wild beasts rather than like men and routed the foe with dreadful carnage. They had hoped to gain a breathing time by this victory, but a new distress attended them. They got entangled in one of

those deep and dismal marshes which abound on those coasts, and in which the wanderer is often drowned or suffocated. For a whole day they toiled through break and bramble, and miry fen, with the water reaching to their girdles. At length they extricated themselves from the swamp, and arrived at the sea-shore. The tide was out, but was about to return, and on this coast it rises rapidly to a great height. Fearing to be overwhelmed by the rising surf, they hastened to climb a rock out of reach of the swelling waters. Here they threw themselves on the earth, panting with fatigue and abandoned to despair. A savage wilderness, filled with still more savage foes, was on one side, on the other the roaring sea. How were they to extricate themselves from these surrounding perils? While reflecting on their desperate situation, they heard the voices of Indians. On looking cautiously around, they beheld four canoes entering a neighboring creek. A party was immediately despatched, who came upon the savages by surprise, drove them into the woods, and seized upon their canoes. In these frail barks the Spaniards escaped from their perilous neighborhood, and traversing the gulf of St. Michael, landed in a less hostile part, whence they set out a second time across the mountains.

It is needless to recount the other hardships they endured, and their further conflicts with the Indians; suffice it to say, after a series of almost incredible sufferings and disasters, they at length arrived in a battered and emaciated condition at Darien. Throughout all their toils and troubles, however, they had managed to preserve a part of the treasure gained in the islands; especially the pearls given them by the cacique of Isla Rica. These were objects of universal admiration. One of them was put up at auction, and bought by Pedrarias, and was afterwards presented by his wife Doña Isabella de Bobadilla to the Empress, who in return gave her four thousand ducats.*

Such was the cupidity of the colonists that the sight of these pearls and the reputed wealth of the islands of the Southern Sea and the kingdoms on its borders made far greater impression on the public mind than the tale told by the adventurers of the horrors they had passed; and every one was eager to seek these wealthy regions beyond the mountains.

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. i., lib. i., cap. 4.

Chapter XXIII.

UNFORTUNATE ENTERPRISES OF THE OFFICERS OF PEDRARIAS—MATRIMONIAL COMPACT BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND VASCO NUÑEZ.

In narrating the preceding expedition of Morales and Pizarro we have been tempted into what may almost be deemed an episode, though it serves to place in a proper light the lurking difficulties and dangers which beset the expeditions of Vasco Nuñez to the same regions and his superior prudence and management in avoiding them. It is not the object of this narrative however to record the general events of the colony under the administration of Don Pedrarias Davila. We refrain therefore from detailing various expeditions set on foot by him to explore and subjugate the surrounding country; and which, being ignorantly or rashly conducted, too often ended in misfortune and disgrace. One of these was to the province of Zenu, where gold was supposed to be taken in the rivers in nets; and where the Bachelor Enciso once undertook to invade the sepulchres. A captain, named Francisco Becerra, penetrated into this country at the head of one hundred and eighty men, well armed and equipped and provided with three pieces of artillery; but neither the commander nor

any of his men returned. An Indian boy who accompanied them was the only one who escaped and told the dismal tale of their falling victims to the assaults and stratagems and poisoned arrows of the Indians.

Another band was defeated by Tubanamà, the ferocious cacique of the mountains, who bore as his banners the bloody shirts of Spaniards slain in former battles. In fine, the colony became so weakened by these repeated losses, and the savages so emboldened by success, that the latter beleaguered it with their forces, harassed it with assaults and ambuscades, and reduced it to great extremity. Such was the alarm in Darien, says the Bishop Las Casas, that the people feared to be burned in their houses. They kept a watchful eye upon the mountains, the plains, and the very branches of the trees. Their imaginations were infected by their fears. If they looked towards the land the long waving grass of the savannas appeared to them to be moving hosts of Indians. If they looked towards the sea they fancied they beheld fleets of canoes in the distance. Pedrarias endeavored to prevent all rumors from abroad that might increase this fevered state of alarm; at the same time he ordered the smelting-house to be closed, which was never done but in time of war. This was done at the suggestion of

the Bishop, who caused prayers to be put up and fasts proclaimed to avert the impending calamities.

While Pedrarias was harassed and perplexed by these complicated evils, he was haunted by continual apprehensions of the ultimate ascendency of Vasco Nuñez. He knew him to be beloved by the people and befriended by the Bishop; and he had received proofs that his services were highly appreciated by the King. He knew also that representations had been sent home by him and his partisans of the evils and abuses of the colony under the present rule, and of the necessity of a more active and efficient governor. He dreaded lest these representations should ultimately succeed; that he should be undermined in the royal favor and Vasco Nuñez be elevated upon his ruins.

The politic Bishop perceived the uneasy state of the Governor's mind, and endeavored by means of his apprehensions to effect that reconciliation which he had sought in vain to produce through more generous motives. He represented to him that his treatment of Vasco Nuñez was odious in the eyes of the people, and must eventually draw on him the displeasure of his sovereign. "But why persist," added he, "in driving a man to become your deadliest enemy, whom you may grapple to your

side as your firmest friend? You have several daughters—give him one in marriage; you will then have for a son-in-law a man of merit and popularity, who is a *hidalgo* by birth, and a favorite of the King. You are advanced in life and infirm; he is in the prime and vigor of his days, and possessed of great activity. You can make him your lieutenant, and while you repose from your toils he can carry on the affairs of the colony with spirit and enterprise; and all his achievements will redound to the advancement of your family and the splendor of your administration."

The Governor and his lady were won by the eloquence of the Bishop and readily listened to his suggestion; and Vasco Nuñez was but too happy to effect a reconciliation on such flattering terms. Written articles were accordingly drawn up and exchanged, contracting a marriage between him and the eldest daughter of Pedrarias. The young lady was then in Spain, but was to be sent for and the nuptials were to be celebrated on her arrival at Darien.

Having thus fulfilled his office of peacemaker, and settled, as he supposed, all feuds and jealousies on the sure and permanent foundation of family alliance, the worthy Bishop departed shortly afterwards for Spain.

Chapter XXIV.

VASCO NUÑEZ TRANSPORTS SHIPS ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

[1516.]

BEHOLD Vasco Nuñez once more in the high career of prosperity! His most implacable enemy had suddenly been converted into his dearest friend; for the Governor, now that he had looked upon him as his son-in-law, loaded him with favors. Above all, he authorized him to build brigantines, and make all the necessary preparations for his long-desired expedition to explore the Southern ocean. The place appointed for these purposes was the port of Careta, situated to the west of Darien; whence there was supposed to be the most convenient route across the mountains. A town called Acla had been founded at this port; and the fortress was already erected, of which Lope de Olano was alcalde; Vasco Nuñez was now empowered to continue the building of the town. Two hundred men were placed under his command, to aid him in carrying his plans into execution, and a sum of money was advanced to him out of the royal treasury. His supply of funds, however, was not sufficient; but he received assistance from a private source. There was a notary at Darien, Hernando de Arguello, a man of some consequence in the

community, and who had been one of the most furious opponents of the unfortunate Nicuesa. He had amassed considerable property, and now embarked a great part of it in the proposed enterprise, on condition, no doubt, of sharing largely in its anticipated profits.

On arriving at Acla, Vasco Nuñez set to work to prepare the materials of four brigantines to be launched into the South Sea. The timber was felled on the Atlantic seaboard; and was then, with the anchors and rigging, transported across the lofty ridge of mountains to the opposite shores of the isthmus. Several Spaniards, thirty negroes, and a great number of Indians were employed for the purpose. They had no other roads but Indian paths, straggling through almost impervious forests, across torrents, and up rugged defiles broken by rocks and precipices. In this way they toiled like ants up the mountains, with their ponderous burdens, under the scorching rays of a tropical sun. Many of the poor Indians sank by the way, and perished under this stupendous task. The Spaniards and negroes, being of hardier constitutions, were better able to cope with the incredible hardships to which they were subjected. On the summit of the mountains a house had been provided for their temporary repose. After remaining here a lit-

tle time to refresh themselves and gain new strength, they renewed their labors, descending the opposite side of the mountains until they reached the navigable part of a river, which they called the Balsas, and which flowed into the Pacific.

Much time and trouble and many lives were expended on this arduous undertaking before they had transported to the river sufficient timber for two brigantines; while the timber for the other two, and the rigging and munitions for the whole, yet remained to be brought. To add to their difficulties they had scarcely begun to work upon the timber before they discovered that it was totally useless, being subject to the ravages of the worms from having been cut in the vicinity of salt water. They were obliged, therefore, to begin anew, and fell trees on the border of the river.

Vasco Nuñez maintained his patience and perseverance, and displayed admirable management under these delays and difficulties. Their supply of food being scanty, he divided his people, Spaniards, negroes, and Indians, into three bands; one was to cut and saw the wood, another to bring the rigging and iron work from Acla, which was twenty-two leagues distant; and the third to forage the neighboring country for provisions.

Scarcely was the timber felled and shaped for use when the rains set in, and the river swelled and overflowed its banks so suddenly, that the workmen barely escaped with their lives, by clambering into trees; while the wood on which they had been working was either buried in sand or slime, or swept away by the raging torrent. Famine was soon added to their other distresses. The foraging party did not return with food; and the swelling of the river cut them off from that part of the country whence they obtained their supplies. They were reduced, therefore, to such scarcity, as to be fain to assuage their hunger with roots gathered in the forests.

In this extremity the Indians bethought themselves of one of their rude and simple expedients. Plunging into the river, they fastened a number of logs together with withes, and connected them with the opposite bank, so as to make a floating bridge. On this a party of the Spaniards crossed with great difficulty and peril, from the violence of the current, and the flexibility of the bridge, which often sank beneath them until the water rose above their girdles. On being safely landed, they foraged the neighborhood, and procured a supply of provisions sufficient for the present emergency.

When the river subsided the workmen again

resumed their labors; a number of recruits arrived from Acla bringing various supplies, and the business of the enterprise was pressed with redoubled ardor until, after a series of incredible toils and hardships, Vasco Nuñez had the satisfaction to behold two of his brigantines floating on the river Balsas. As soon as they could be equipped for sea he embarked in them with as many Spaniards as they could carry; and issuing from the river launched triumphantly on the great ocean he had discovered.

We can readily imagine the exultation of this intrepid adventurer, and how amply he was repaid for all his sufferings, when he first spread a sail on that untraversed ocean, and felt that the range of an unknown world was open to him.

There are points in the history of these Spanish discoveries of the Western Hemisphere which make us pause with wonder and admiration at the daring spirit of the men who conducted them, and the appalling difficulties surmounted by their courage and perseverance. We know few instances, however, more striking than this peacemeal transportation across the mountains of Darien of the first European ships that ploughed the waves of the Pacific; and we can readily excuse the boast of the old Castilian writers when they exclaim: "That

none but Spaniards could ever have conceived or persisted in such an undertaking ; and no commander in the New World but Vasco Nuñez could have conducted it to a successful issue." *

Chapter XXV.

CRUISE OF VASCO NUÑEZ IN THE SOUTHERN SEA—RUMORS FROM ACLA.

THE first cruise of Vasco Nuñez was to the group of Pearl islands, on the principal one of which he disembarked the greater part of his crews, and despatched the brigantines to the mainland to bring off the remainder. It was his intention to construct the other two vessels of his proposed squadron at this island. During the absence of the brigantines he ranged the island with his men to collect provisions and to establish a complete sway over the natives. On the return of his vessels and while preparations were making for the building of the others he embarked with a hundred men, and departed on a reconnoitring cruise to the eastward, towards the region pointed out by the Indians as abounding in riches.

Having passed about twenty leagues be-

* Herrera, decad. ii., lib. ii., cap. 11.

yond the gulf of San Miguel the mariners were alarmed at beholding a great number of whales, which resembled a reef of rocks stretching far into the sea, and lashed by breakers. In an unknown ocean like this every unusual object is apt to inspire alarm. The seamen feared to approach these fancied dangers in the dark; Vasco Nuñez anchored therefore for the night under a point of land, intending to continue in the same direction on the following day. When the morning dawned, however, the wind had changed and was contrary; whereupon he altered his course, and thus abandoned a cruise, which, if persevered in, might have terminated in the discovery of Peru! Steering for the mainland he anchored on that part of the coast governed by the cacique Chuchamà, who had massacred Bernardo Morales and his companions when reposing in his village. Here, landing with his men, Vasco Nuñez came suddenly upon the dwelling of the cacique. The Indians sallied forth to defend their homes, but were routed with great loss; and ample vengeance was taken upon them for their outrage upon the laws of hospitality. Having thus avenged the death of his countrymen, Vasco Nuñez re-embarked and returned to Isla Rica.

He now applied himself diligently to com-

plete the building of his brigantines, despatching men to Acla to bring the necessary stores and rigging across the mountains. While thus occupied a rumor reached him that a new governor named Lope de Sorsa was coming out from Spain to supersede Pedrarias. Vasco Nuñez was troubled at these tidings. A new governor would be likely to adopt new measures or to have new favorites. He feared therefore that some order might come to suspend or embarrass his expedition ; or that the command of it might be given to another. In this perplexity he held a consultation with several of his confidential officers.

After some debate it was agreed among them that a trusty and intelligent person should be sent as a scout to Acla under pretence of procuring munitions for the ships. Should he find Pedrarias in quiet possession of the government he was to account to him for the delay of the expedition, and request that the time allotted to it might be extended, and to request reinforcements and supplies. Should he find, however, a new governor actually arrived, he was to return immediately with the tidings. In such case it was resolved to put to sea before any contrary orders should arrive, trusting eventually to excuse themselves on the plea of zeal and good intentions.

Chapter XXVII.

RECONNOITRING EXPEDITION OF GARABITO—STRATAGEM OF PEDRARIAS TO ENTRAP VASCO NUÑEZ.

THE person intrusted with the reconnoitring expedition to Acla was Andres Garabito, in whose fidelity and discretion Vasco Nuñez had implicit confidence. His confidence was destined to be fatally deceived. According to the assertions of contemporaries, this Garabito cherished a secret and vindictive enmity against his commander, arising from a simple but a natural cause. Vasco Nuñez had continued to have a fondness for the Indian damsel, daughter of the cacique Careta, whom he had received from her father as a pledge of amity. Some dispute arose concerning her on one occasion between him and Garabito, in the course of which he expressed himself in severe and galling language. Garabito was deeply mortified at some of his expressions, and being of a malignant spirit, determined on a dastardly revenge. He wrote privately to Pedrarias, assuring him that Vasco Nuñez had no intention of solemnizing his marriage with his daughter, being completely under the influence of an Indian paramour; that he made use of the friendship of Pedrarias merely to further his own selfish views, intending, as soon

as his ships were ready, to throw off all allegiance, and put to sea as an independent commander.

This mischievous letter Garabito had written immediately after the last departure of Vasco Nuñez from Acla. Its effect upon the proud and jealous spirit of the Governor may easily be conceived. All his former suspicions were immediately revived. They acquired strength during a long interval that elapsed without tidings being received from the expedition. There were designing and prejudiced persons at hand, who perceived and quickened these jealous feelings of the Governor. Among these was the Bachelor Corral, who cherished a deep grudge against Vasco Nuñez for having once thrown him into prison for his factious conduct; and Alonzo de la Puente, the royal treasurer, whom Vasco Nuñez had affronted by demanding the repayment of a loan. Such was the tempest gradually gathering in the factious little colony of Darien.

The subsequent conduct of Garabito gives much confirmation to the charge of perfidy advanced against him. When he arrived at Acla, he found that Pedrarias remained in possession of the government; for his intended successor had died in the very harbor. The conduct and conversation of Garabito was such as to arouse

suspicion; he was arrested, and his papers and letters were sent to Pedrarias. When examined, he readily suffered himself to be wrought upon by threats of punishment and promises of pardon, and revealed all that he knew, and declared still more what he suspected and surmised, of the plans and intentions of Vasco Nuñez.

The arrest of Garabito, and the seizure of his letters, produced a great agitation at Darien. It was considered a revival of the ancient animosity between the Governor and Vasco Nuñez, and the friends of the latter trembled for his safety.

Hernando de Arguello especially was in great alarm. He had embarked the most of his fortune in the expedition, and the failure of it would be ruinous to him. He wrote to Vasco Nuñez, informing him of the critical posture of affairs, and urging him to put to sea without delay. He would be protected at all events, he said, by the Jeronimite Fathers of San Domingo, who were at that time all-powerful in the New World, and who regarded his expedition as calculated to promote the glory of God as well as the dominion of the King.* This

* In consequence of the eloquent representations made to the Spanish government by the venerable Las Casas, of the cruel wrongs and oppressions prac-

letter fell into the hands of Pedrarias, and convinced him of the existence of a dangerous plot against his authority. He immediately ordered Arguello to be arrested; and now devised means to get Vasco Nuñez within his power. While the latter remained on the shores of the South Sea with his brigantines, and his band of hearty and devoted followers, Pedrarias knew it would be in vain to attempt to take him by force. Dissembling his suspicions and intentions, therefore, he wrote to him in amicable terms, requesting him to repair immediately to Acla, as he wished to confer with him about the impending expedition. Fearing, however, that Vasco Nuñez might suspect his motives and refuse to comply, he at the same time ordered Francisco Pizarro to muster all the armed force he could collect, and seek and arrest his late patron and commander wherever he might be found.

tised upon the Indians in the colonies, the Cardinal Ximenes, in 1516, sent out three Jeronimite Friars, chosen for their zeal and abilities, clothed with full powers to inquire into and remedy all abuses, and to take all proper measures for the good government, religious instruction, and effectual protection of the natives. The exercise of their powers at San Domingo made a great sensation in the New World, and, for a time, had a beneficial effect in checking the oppressive and licentious conduct of the colonists.

So great was the terror inspired by the arrest of Arguello, and by the general violence of Pedrarias, that though Vasco Nuñez was a favorite with the great mass of the people no one ventured to warn him of the danger that attended his return to Acla.

Chapter XXVII.

VASCO NUÑEZ AND THE ASTROLOGER—HIS RETURN TO ACLA.

THE old Spanish writers who have treated of the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez, record an anecdote which is worthy of being cited, as characteristic of the people of the age. Among the motley crowd of adventurers lured across the ocean by the reputed wealth and wonders of the New World, was an Italian astrologer, a native of Venice, named Micer Codro. At the time that Vasco Nuñez held supreme sway at Darien, this reader of the stars had cast his horoscope and pretended to foretell his destiny. Pointing one night to a certain star, he assured him that in the year in which he should behold that star in a part of the heavens which he designated, his life would be in eminent jeopardy; but should he survive this year of peril, he would become the richest and most renowned captain throughout the Indies.

Several years, it is added, had elapsed since this prediction was made ; yet, that it still dwelt in the mind of Vasco Nuñez, was evident from the following circumstance. While waiting the return of his messenger, Garabito, he was on the shore of Isla Rica one serene evening, in company with some of his officers, when, regarding the heavens, he beheld the fated star exactly in that part of the firmanent which had been pointed out by the Italian astrologer. Turning to his companions, with a smile, "Behold," said he, "the wisdom of those who believe in soothsayers, and, above all, in such an astrologer as Micer Codro ! According to his prophecy, I should now be in imminent peril of my life ; yet, here I am, within reach of all my wishes ; sound in health, with four brigantines and three hundred men at my command, and on the point of exploring the great Southern ocean."

At this fated juncture, says the chroniclers, arrived the hypocritical letter of Pedrarias, inviting him to an interview at Acla ! The discreet reader will decide for himself what credit to give to this anecdote, or rather, what allowance to make for the little traits of coincidence gratuitously added to the original fact by writers who delight in the marvellous. The tenor of this letter awakened no suspicion in the

breast of Vasco Nuñez, who reposed entire confidence in the amity of the Governor, as his intended father-in-law, and appears to have been unconscious of anything in his own conduct that could warrant hostility. Leaving his ships in command of Francisco Compañon, he departed immediately to meet the Governor at Acla, unattended by any armed force.

The messengers who had brought the letter, maintained at first a cautious silence as to the events which had transpired at Darien. They were gradually won, however, by the frank and genial manners of Vasco Nuñez, and grieved to see so gallant a soldier hurrying into the snare. Having crossed the mountains, and drawn near to Acla, their kind feelings got the better of their caution, and they revealed the true nature of their errand, and the hostile intentions of Pedrarias. Vasco Nuñez was struck with astonishment at the recital; but, being unconscious, it is said, of any evil intention, he could scarcely credit this sudden hostility in a man who had but recently promised him his daughter in marriage. He imagined the whole to be some groundless jealousy, which his own appearance would dispel, and accordingly continued on his journey. He had not proceeded far, however, when he was met by a band of armed men, led by Francisco Pizarro. The lat-

ter stepped forward to arrest his ancient commander. Vasco Nuñez paused for a moment and regarded him with a look of reproachful astonishment. "How is this, Francisco?" exclaimed he. "Is this the way you have been accustomed to receive me?" Offering no further remonstrance, he suffered himself quietly to be taken prisoner by his former adherents, and conducted in chains to Acla. Here he was thrown into prison, and Bartolome Hurtado, once his favorite officer, was sent to take command of his squadron.

Chapter XXVIII.

TRIALS OF VASCO NUÑEZ.

Don Pedrarias concealed his exultation at the success of the stratagem by which he had ensnared his generous and confiding rival. He even visited him in prison, and pretended deep concern at being obliged to treat him with this temporary rigor, attributing it entirely to certain accusations lodged against him by the treasurer, Alonzo de la Puente, which his official situation compelled him to notice and investigate.

"Be not afflicted, however, my son!" said the hypocrite; "an investigation will, doubtless, not merely establish your innocence, but

serve to render your zeal and loyalty still more conspicuous."

While Pedrarias assumed this soothing tone towards his prisoner, he urged the alcalde mayor, Espinosa, to proceed against him with the utmost rigor of the law.

The charge brought against him of a treasonable conspiracy to cast off all allegiance to the Crown, and to assume an independent sway on the borders of the Southern Sea, was principally supported by the confessions of Andres Garabito. The evidence is also cited of a soldier, who stood sentinel one night near the quarters of Vasco Nuñez on Isla Rica, and who, being driven to take shelter from the rain under the eaves of his house, overheard a conversation between that commander and certain of his officers, wherein they agreed to put to sea with the squadron on their own account, and set the Governor at defiance. This testimony, according to Las Casas, arose from a misconstruction on the part of the sentinel, who only heard a portion of their conversation, relating to their intention of sailing without waiting orders, in case a new governor should arrive to supersede Pedrarias.

The Governor, in the meantime, informed himself from day to day, and hour to hour, of the progress of the trial ; and considering the

evidence sufficiently strong to warrant his personal hostility, he now paid another visit to his prisoner, and throwing off all affectation of kindness, upbraided him in the most passionate manner.

"Hitherto," said he, "I have treated you as a son, because I thought you loyal to your King, and to me as his representative; but as I find you have meditated rebellion against the Crown of Castile, I cast you off from my affection, and shall henceforth treat you as an enemy."

Vasco Nuñez indignantly repelled the charge, and appealed to the confiding frankness of his conduct as a proof of his innocence. "Had I been conscious of my guilt," said he, "what could have induced me to come here and put myself into your hands? Had I meditated rebellion, what prevented me from carrying it into effect? I had four ships ready to weigh anchor, three hundred brave men at my command, and an open sea before me. What had I to do but to spread sail and press forward? There was no doubt of finding a land, whether rich or poor, sufficient for me and mine, far beyond the reach of your control. In the innocence of my heart, however, I came here promptly, at your mere request, and my reward is slander, indignity, and chains!"

The noble and ingenuous appeal of Vasco

Nuñez had no effect on the prejudiced feelings of the Governor. On the contrary, he was but the more exasperated against his prisoner, and ordered that his irons should be doubled.

The trial was now urged by him with increased eagerness. Lest the present accusation should not be sufficient to effect the ruin of his victim, the old inquest into his conduct as Governor, which had remained suspended for many years, was revived, and he was charged anew with the wrongs inflicted on the Bachelor Enciso, and with the death of the unfortunate Nicuesa.

Notwithstanding all these charges, the trial went on slowly, with frequent delays, for the alcalde mayor, Gaspar de Espinosa, seems to have had but little relish for the task assigned him, and to have needed frequent spurring from the eager and passionate Governor. He probably considered the accused as technically guilty, though innocent of all intentional rebellion, but was ordered to decide according to the strict letter of the law. He therefore at length gave a reluctant verdict against Vasco Nuñez, but recommended him to mercy, on account of his great services, or entreated that at least he might be permitted to appeal. "No," said the unrelenting Pedrarias; "if he has merited death, let him suffer death!" He accordingly condemned him to be beheaded.

The same sentence was passed upon several of his officers who were implicated in his alleged conspiracy; among these was Hernando de Arguello, who had written the letter to Vasco Nuñez, informing him of the arrest of his messenger, and advising him to put to sea, without heeding the hostility of Pedrarias. As to the perfidious informer Garabito, he was pardoned and set at liberty.

In considering this case as far as we are enabled, from the imperfect testimony on record, we are inclined to think it one where passion and self-interest interfered with the pure administration of justice. Pedrarias had always considered Vasco Nuñez as a dangerous rival, and though his jealousy had been for some time lulled by looking on him as an intended son-in-law, it was revived by the suggestion that he intended to evade his alliance and dispute his authority. His exasperated feelings hurried him too far to retreat, and having loaded his prisoner with chains and indignities, his death became indispensable to his own security.

For our own part, we have little doubt that it was the fixed intention of Vasco Nuñez, after he had once succeeded in the arduous undertaking of transporting his ships across the mountains, to suffer no capricious order from Pedrarias, nor any other governor, to defeat

the enterprise which he had so long meditated, and for which he had so laboriously prepared. It is probable he may have expressed such general determination in the hearing of Garabito, and of others of his companions. We can find ample excuse for such a resolution in his consciousness of his own deserts; his experience of past hindrances to this expedition, arising from the jealousy of others; his feeling of some degree of authority from his office of adelantado; and his knowledge of the favorable disposition and kind intentions of his sovereign toward him. We acquit him entirely of the senseless idea of rebelling against the Crown; and suggest these considerations in palliation of any meditated disobedience of Pedrarias, should such a charge be supposed to have been substantiated.

Chapter XXIX.

EXECUTION OF VASCO NUÑEZ.

[1517.]

It was a day of gloom and horror at Acla when Vasco Nuñez and his companions were led forth to execution. The populace were moved to tears at the unhappy fate of a man whose gallant deeds had excited their admiration, and whose generous qualities had won

their hearts. Most of them regarded him as the victim of a jealous tyrant, and even those who thought him guilty, saw something brave and brilliant in the very crime imputed to him. Such however was the general dread inspired by the severe measures of Pedrarias that no one dared to lift up his voice either in murmur or remonstrance.

The public crier walked before Vasco Nuñez, proclaiming: "This is the punishment inflicted by command of the King and his lieutenant, Don Pedrarias Davila, on this man, as a traitor and an usurper of the territories of the Crown."

When Vasco Nuñez heard these words he exclaimed, indignantly: "It is false! never did such a crime enter my mind. I have ever served my King with truth and loyalty, and sought to augment his dominions."

These words were of no avail in his extremity, but they were fully believed by the populace.

The execution took place in the public square of Acla; and we are assured by the historian Oviedo, who was in the colony at the time, that the cruel Pedrarias was a secret witness of the bloody spectacle, which he contemplated from between the reeds of the wall of a house about twelve paces from the scaffold! *

* Oviedo, *Hist. Ind.*, p. 2, cap. 9, MS.

Vasco Nuñez was the first to suffer death. Having confessed himself and partaken of the sacrament, he ascended the scaffold with a firm step and a calm and manly demeanor; and laying his head upon the block, it was severed in an instant from his body. Three of his officers, Valderrabano, Botello, and Herman Muños were in like manner brought one by one to the block, and the day had nearly expired before the last of them was executed.

One victim still remained. It was Hernando de Arguello, who had been condemned as an accomplice, for having written the intercepted letter.

The populace could no longer restrain their feelings. They had not dared to intercede for Vasco Nuñez, knowing the implacable enmity of Pedrarias; but they now sought the Governor, and throwing themselves at his feet, entreated that this man might be spared, as he had taken no active part in the alleged treason. The daylight, they said, was at an end, and it seemed as if God had hastened the night to prevent the execution.

The stern heart of Pedrarias was not to be touched. "No," said he, "I would sooner die myself than spare one of them." The unfortunate Arguello was led to the block. The brief tropical twilight was past, and in the

gathering gloom of the night the operations on the scaffold could not be distinguished. The multitude stood listening in breathless silence until the stroke of the executioner told that all was accomplished. They then dispersed to their homes with hearts filled with grief and bitterness, and a night of lamentation succeeded to this day of horrors.

The vengeance of Pedrarias was not satisfied with the death of his victim; he confiscated his property and dishonored his remains, causing his head to be placed upon a pole, and exposed for several days in the public square.*

Thus perished in his forty-second year, in the prime and vigor of his days and the full career of his glory, one of the most illustrious and deserving of Spanish discoverers; a victim to the basest and most perfidious envy.

How vain are our most confident hopes, our brightest triumphs! When Vasco Nuñez from the mountains of Darien beheld the Southern Ocean revealed to his gaze, he considered its unknown realms at his disposal. When he had launched his ships upon its waters, and his sails were in a manner flapping in the wind, to bear him in quest of the wealthy empire of Peru, he scoffed at the prediction of the astrologer, and defied the influence of the stars.

* Oviedo, *ubi sup.*

Behold him interrupted at the very moment of his departure, betrayed into the hands of his most invidious foe, the very enterprise that was to have crowned him with glory wrested into a crime, and himself hurried to a bloody and ignominious grave at the foot, as it were, of the mountain whence he had made his discovery! His fate, like that of his renowned predecessor, Columbus, proves that it is sometimes dangerous even to deserve too greatly.

FORTUNES OF VALDIVIA AND HIS COMPANIONS.

IT was in the year 1512 that Valdivia, the regidor of Darien, was sent to Hispaniola by Vasco Nuñez de Balboa for reinforcements and supplies for the colony. He set sail in a caravel and pursued his voyage prosperously until he arrived in sight of the island of Jamaica. Here he was encountered by one of the violent hurricanes which swept those latitudes, and driven on the shoals and sunken rocks called the Vipers, since infamous for many a shipwreck. His vessel soon went to pieces, and Valdivia and his crew, consisting of twenty men, escaped with difficulty in the boat without having time to secure a supply either of water or provisions. Having no sails and their oars being scarcely fit for use, they were driven about for thirteen days, at the mercy of the currents of those unknown seas. During this time their sufferings from hunger

and thirst were indescribable. Seven of their number perished and the rest were nearly famished, when they were stranded on the eastern coast of Yucatan in a province called Maya. Here they were set upon by the natives, who broke their boat in pieces and carried them off captive to the cacique of the province, by whose orders they were mewed up in a kind of pen.

At first their situation appeared tolerable enough, considering the horrors from which they had escaped. They were closely confined, it is true, but they had plenty to eat and drink and soon began to recover flesh and vigor. In a little while, however, their enjoyment of this good cheer met with a check, for the unfortunate Valdivia and four of his companions were singled out by the cacique on account of their improved condition, to be offered up to his idols. The natives of this coast in fact were cannibals, devouring the flesh of their enemies and of such strangers as fell into their hands. The wretched Valdivia and his fellow victims, therefore, were sacrificed in the bloody temple of the idol, and their limbs were afterwards served up at a grand feast held by the cacique and his subjects.

The horror of the survivors may be more readily imagined than described. Their hearts died within them when they heard the yells

and howlings of the savages over their victims, and the still more horrible revelry of their cannibal orgies. They turned with loathing from the food set so abundantly before them, at the idea that it was but intended to fatten them for a future banquet.

Recovering from the first stupor of alarm, their despair lent them additional force. They succeeded in breaking in the night from the kind of cage in which they were confined, and fled to the depths of the forest. Here they wandered about forlorn, exposed to all the dangers and miseries of the wilderness; famishing with hunger, yet dreading to approach the haunts of men. At length their sufferings drove them forth from the woods into another part of the country where they were again taken captive. The cacique of this province, however, was an enemy to the one from whom they had escaped, and of less cruel propensities. He spared their lives and contented himself with making them slaves, exacting from them the severest labor. They had to cut and draw wood, to procure water from a distance, and to carry enormous burdens. The cacique died soon after their capture and was succeeded by another called Taxmar. He was a chief of some talent and sagacity, but he continued the same rigorous treatment of the captives. By

degrees they sank beneath the hardships of their lot until only two were left; one of them a sturdy sailor named Gonzalo Guerrero, the other a kind of clerical adventurer named Geronimo de Aguilar. The sailor had the good luck to be transferred to the service of the cacique of the neighboring province of Chatemal, by whom he was treated with kindness. Being a thorough son of the ocean, seasoned to all weathers and ready for any chance or change, he soon accommodated himself to his new situation, followed the cacique to the wars, rose by his hardihood and prowess to be a distinguished warrior, and succeeded in gaining the heart and hand of an Indian princess.

The other survivor, Geronimo de Aguilar, was of a different complexion. He was a native of Ecija, in Andalusia, and had been brought up to the Church and regularly ordained, and shortly afterwards had sailed in one of the expeditions to San Domingo, whence he had passed to Darien.

He proceeded in a different mode from that adopted by his comrade, the sailor, in his dealings with the Indians, and in one more suited to his opposite calling. Instead of playing the hero among the men and the gallant among the women, he recollected his priestly obligations to humility and chastity. Accordingly

he made himself a model of meekness and obedience to the cacique and his warriors, while he closed his eyes to the charms of the infidel women. Nay, in the latter respect, he reinforced his clerical vows by a solemn promise to God to resist all temptations of the flesh, so he might be delivered out of the hands of these Gentiles.

Such were the opposite measures of the sailor and the saint, and they appear to have been equally successful. Aguilar, by his meek obedience to every order, however arbitrary and capricious, gradually won the good-will of the cacique and his family. Taxmar however subjected him to many trials before he admitted him to his entire confidence. One day when the Indians, painted and decorated in warlike style, were shooting at a mark, a warrior who had for some time fixed his eyes on Aguilar, approached suddenly and seized him by the arm. "Thou seest," said he, "the certainty of these archers; if they aim at the eye, they hit the eye—if at the mouth, they hit the mouth—what wouldst thou think, if thou wert to be placed instead of the mark, and they were to shoot at and miss thee?"

Aguilar secretly trembled lest he should be the victim of some cruel caprice of the kind. Dissembling his fears, however, he replied with great submission, "I am your slave, and you

may do with me as you please; but you are too wise to destroy a slave who is useful and obedient." His answer pleased the cacique, who had secretly sent his warrior to try his humility.

Another trial of the worthy Geronimo was less stern and fearful indeed, but equally perplexing. The cacique had remarked his unexampled discretion with respect to the sex, but doubted its sincerity. After laying many petty temptations in his way, which Geronimo resisted with the self-denial of a saint, he at length determined to subject him to a fiery ordeal. He accordingly sent him on a fishing expedition, accompanied by a buxom damsel of fourteen years of age. They were to pass the night by the seaside, so as to be ready to fish at the first dawn of day, and were allowed but one hammock to sleep in. It was an embarrassing predicament—not apparently to the Indian beauty, but certainly to the scrupulous Geronimo. He remembered however his double vow, and suspending his hammock to two trees, resigned it to his companion; while, lighting a fire on the sea-shore, he stretched himself before it on the sand. It was, as he acknowledged, a night of fearful trial, for his sandy couch was cold and cheerless, the hammock warm and tempting; and the infidel damsel had

been instructed to assail him with all manner of blandishments and reproaches. His resolution however, though often shaken, was never overcome; and the morning dawned upon him still faithful to his vow.

The fishing over, he returned to the residence of the cacique, where his companion being closely questioned, made known the triumph of his self-denial before all the people. From that time forward he was held in great respect; the cacique especially treated him with unlimited confidence, intrusting to him the care, not merely of his house, but of his wives, during his occasional absence.

Aguilar now felt ambitious of rising to greater consequence among the savages, but this he knew was only to be done by deeds of arms. He had the example of the sturdy seaman, Gonzalo Guerrero before his eyes, who had become a great captain in the province in which he resided. He entreated Taxmar therefore to entrust him with bow and arrows, buckler and war-club, and to enroll him among his warriors. The cacique complied. Aguilar soon made himself expert at his new weapons, signalized himself repeatedly in battle, and, from his superior knowledge of the arts of war, rendered Taxmar such essential service as to excite the jealousy of some of the neighboring caciques.

One of them remonstrated with Taxmar for employing a warrior who was of a different religion, and insisted that Aguilar should be sacrificed to their gods. "No," replied Taxmar, "I will not make so base a return for such signal services: surely the gods of Aguilar must be good, since they aid him so effectually in maintaining a just cause."

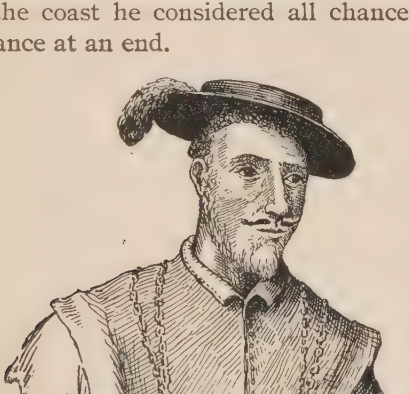
The cacique was so incensed at this reply that he assembled his warriors and marched to make war upon Taxmar. Many of the counsellors of the latter urged him to give up the stranger who was the cause of this hostility. Taxmar however rejected their counsel with disdain, and prepared for battle. Aguilar assured him that his faith in the Christians' God would be rewarded with victory; he in fact concerted a plan of battle, which was adopted. Concealing himself with a chosen band of warriors among thickets and herbage, he suffered the enemy to pass by in making their attack. Taxmar and his host pretended to give way at the first onset. The foe rushed heedlessly in pursuit; whereupon Aguilar and his ambuscade assaulted them in the rear. Taxmar turned upon them in front; they were thrown into confusion, routed with great slaughter, and many of their chiefs taken prisoners. This victory gave Taxmar the sway over the land

and strengthened Aguilar more than ever in his good graces.

Several years had elapsed in this manner, when intelligence was brought to the province of the arrival on the neighboring coast of great vessels of wonderful construction, filled by white and bearded men, who fought with thunder and lightning. It was in fact the squadron of Francisco Hernandez de Cordova, then on a voyage of discovery. The tidings of this strange invasion spread consternation through the country, heightened, if we may credit the old Spanish writers, by a prophecy current among the savages of these parts, and uttered in former times by a priest named Chilam Cambal, who foretold that a white and bearded people would come from the region of the rising sun, and would overturn their idols and subjugate the land.

The heart of Geronimo de Aguilar beat quick with hope when he heard of European ships at hand; he was distant from the coast however and perceived that he was too closely watched by the Indians to have any chance of escape. Dissembling his feelings, therefore, he affected to hear of the ships with perfect indifference, and to have no desire to join the strangers. The ships disappeared from the coast, and he remained disconsolate at heart, but was regarded with increased confidence by the natives.

His hopes were again revived in the course of a year or two by the arrival on the coast of other ships, which were those commanded by Juan de Grijalva, who coasted Yucatan in 1518; Aguilar however was again prevented by the jealous watchfulness of the Indians from attempting his escape, and when this squadron left the coast he considered all chance of deliverance at an end.



JUAN DE GRIJALVA

REDRAWN FROM HERRERA'S "HISTORY OF THE WEST INDIES"

Seven years had gone by since his capture, and he had given up all hopes of being restored to his country and friends, when, in 1519, there

arrived one day at the village three Indians, natives of the small island of Cozumel, which lies a few leagues in the sea opposite the eastern coast of Yucatan. They brought tidings of another visit of white and bearded men to their shores, and one of them delivered a letter to Aguilar, which, being entirely naked, he concealed in the long tresses of his hair which were bound round his head.

Aguilar received the letter with wonder and delight and read it in the presence of the cacique and his warriors. It proved to be from Hernando Cortez, who was at that time on his great expedition which ended in the conquest of Mexico. He had been obliged by stress of weather to anchor at the island of Cozumel, where he learned from the natives that several white men were entertained in captivity among the Indians on the neighboring coast of Yucatan. Finding it impossible to approach the mainland with his ships, he prevailed upon three of the islanders, by means of gifts and promises, to venture upon an embassy among their cannibal neighbors, and to convey a letter to the captive white men. Two of the smallest caravels of the squadron were sent under the command of Diego de Ordas, who was ordered to land the three messengers at the point of Cotoche, and to wait there eight days for their return.

The letter brought by these envoys informed the Christian captives of the force and destination of the squadron of Cortez, and of his having sent the caravels to wait for them at the point of Cotoche, with a ransom for their deliverance, inviting them to hasten and join him at Cozumel.

The transport of Aguilar on first reading the letter was moderated when he reflected on the obstacles that might prevent him from profiting by this chance of deliverance. He had made himself too useful to the cacique to hope that he would readily give him his liberty, and he knew the jealous and irritable nature of the savages too well, not to fear that even an application for leave to depart might draw upon him the severest treatment. He endeavored therefore to operate upon the cacique through his apprehensions. To this end he informed him that the piece of paper which he held in his hand brought him a full account of the mighty armament that had arrived on the coast. He described the number of ships and various particulars concerning the squadron, all which were amply corroborated by the testimony of the messengers. The cacique and his warriors were astonished at this strange mode of conveying intelligence from a distance, and regarded the letter as something mysterious and

supernatural. Aguilar went on to relate the tremendous and superhuman powers of the people in these ships, who, armed with thunder and lightning, wreaked destruction on all who displeased them, while they dispensed inestimable gifts and benefits on such as proved themselves their friends. He at the same time spread before the cacique various presents brought by the messengers, as specimens of the blessings to be expected from the friendship of the strangers. The intimation was effectual. The cacique was filled with awe at the recital of the terrific powers of the white men, and his eyes were dazzled by the glittering trinkets displayed before him. He entreated Aguilar therefore to act as his ambassador and mediator, and to secure him the amity of the strangers.

Aguilar saw with transport the prospect of a speedy deliverance. In this moment of exultation he bethought himself of the only surviving comrade of his past fortunes, Gonzalo Guerrero, and, sending the letter of Cortez to him, invited him to accompany him in his escape. The sturdy seaman was at this time a great chieftain in his province, and his Indian bride had borne him a numerous progeny. His heart however yearned after his native country, and he might have been tempted to leave his honors and dignities, his infidel wife and half-savage offspring

behind him, but an insuperable though somewhat ludicrous obstacle presented itself to his wishes. Having long since given over all expectation of a return to civilized life, he had conformed to the customs of the country and had adopted the external signs and decorations that marked him as a warrior and a man of rank. His face and hands were indelibly painted or tattooed, his ears and lips were slit to admit huge Indian ornaments, and his nose was drawn down almost to his mouth by a massy ring of gold and a dangling jewel.

Thus curiously garbled and disfigured, the honest seaman felt that however he might be admired in Yucatan, he should be apt to have a hooting rabble at his heels in Spain. He made up his mind therefore to remain a great man among the savages, rather than run the risk of being shown as a man-monster at home.

Finding that he had declined accompanying him, Geronimo de Aguilar set off for the point of Cotoche, escorted by three Indians. The time he had lost in waiting for Guerrero had nearly proved fatal to his hopes, for when he arrived at the point, the caravels sent by Cortez had departed, though several crosses of reeds set up in different places gave tokens of the recent presence of Christians.

The only hope that remained was that the

squadron of Cortez might yet linger at the opposite island of Cozumel. But how was he to get there? While wandering disconsolately along the shore, he found a canoe half buried in sand and water and with one side in a state of decay; with the assistance of the Indians he cleaned it and set it afloat, and on looking further found the stave of a hogshead which might serve for a paddle. It was a frail embarkation in which to cross an arm of the sea, several leagues wide, but there was no alternative. Prevailing on the Indians to accompany him, he launched forth in the canoe and coasted the mainland until he came to the narrowest part of the strait, where it was but four leagues across; here he stood directly for Cozumel, contending as well as he was able with a strong current, and at length succeeded in reaching the island.

He had scarce landed when a party of Spaniards, who had been lying in wait, rushed forth from their concealment sword in hand. The three Indians would have fled, but Aguilar reassured them, and calling out to the Spaniards in their own language, assured them that he was a Christian. Then throwing himself on his knees and raising his eyes streaming with tears to Heaven, he gave thanks to God for having restored him to his countrymen.

The Spaniards gazed at him with astonishment. From his language he was evidently a Castilian, but to all appearance he was an Indian. He was perfectly naked; wore his hair braided round his head in the manner of the country, and his complexion was burnt by the sun to a tawny color. He had a bow in his hand, a quiver at his shoulder, and a network pouch at his side, in which he carried his provisions.

The Spaniards proved to be a reconnoitring party sent out by Cortez to watch the approach of the canoe, which had been descried coming from Yucatan. Cortez had given up all hopes of being joined by the captives, the caravel having waited the allotted time at Cotoche, and returned without news of them. He had in fact made sail to prosecute his voyage, but fortunately one of his ships sprung a leak, which obliged him to return to the island.

When Geronimo de Aguilar and his companions arrived in the presence of Cortez, who was surrounded by his officers, they made a profound reverence, squatted on the ground, laid their bows and arrows beside them, and touching their right hands wet with spittle on the ground, rubbed them about the region of the heart, such being their sign of the most devoted submission.

Cortez greeted Aguilar with a hearty welcome, and raising him from the earth, took from his own person a large yellow mantle lined with crimson, and threw it over his shoulders. The latter however had for a long time gone entirely naked, that even this scanty covering was at first almost insupportable, and he had become so accustomed to the diet of the natives, that he found it difficult to reconcile his stomach to the meat and drink set before him.

When he had sufficiently recovered from the agitation of his arrival among Christians, Cortez drew from him the particulars of his story, and found that he was related to one of his own friends, the Licentiate Marcos de Aguilar. He treated him therefore with additional kindness and respect, and retained him about his person, to aid him as an interpreter in his great Mexican expedition.

The happiness of Geronimo de Aguilar at once more being restored to his countrymen was doomed to suffer some alloy from the disasters that had happened in his family. Peter Martyr records a touching anecdote of the effect produced upon his mother by the tidings of his misfortune. A vague report reached her in Spain, that her son had fallen into the hands of cannibals. All the horrible tales

concerning the treatment of these savages to their prisoners rushed to her imagination, and she went distracted. Whenever she beheld roasted meat, or flesh, upon the spit, she would fill the house with her outcries. "Oh, wretched mother! oh, most miserable of women!" would she exclaim; "behold the limbs of my murdered son!"

It is to be hoped that the tidings of his deliverance had a favorable effect upon her intellects, and that she lived to rejoice at his after fortunes. He served Hernando Cortez with great courage and ability throughout his Mexican conquests, acting sometimes as a soldier, sometimes as interpreter and ambassador to the Indians, and in reward of his fidelity and services was appointed regidor, or civil governor of the city of Mexico.

* P. Martyr, decad. iv., cap. 6.

MICER CODRO, THE ASTROLOGER

THE fate of the Italian astrologer, Micer Codro, who predicted the end of Vasco Nuñez, is related by the historian Oviedo with some particulars that border upon the marvellous. It appears that after the death of his patron he continued for several years rambling about the New World, in the train of the Spanish discoverers; but intent upon studying the secrets of its natural history rather than searching after its treasures.

In the course of his wanderings he was once coasting the shores of the Southern Ocean, in a ship commanded by one Geronimo de Valenzuela, from whom he received such cruel treatment as to cause his death, though what the nature of the treatment was, we are not precisely informed.

Finding his end approaching, the unfortunate astrologer addressed Valenzuela in the most solemn manner: "Captain," said he,

"you have caused my death by your cruelty; I now summon you to appear with me, within a year, before the judgment-seat of God!"

The captain made a light and scoffing answer and treated his summons with contempt.

They were then off the coast of Veragua, near the verdant islands of Zebaco, which lie at the entrance of the gulf of Parita or Paria. The poor astrologer gazed wistfully with his dying eyes upon the green and shady groves, and entreated the pilot or mate of the caravel to land him on one of the islands, that he might die in peace. "Micer Codro," replied the pilot, "those are not islands, but points of land: there are no islands hereabout."

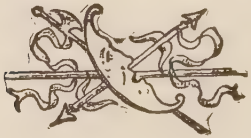
"There are, indeed," replied the astrologer, "two good and pleasant islands, well watered and near to the coast, and within them is a great bay with a harbor. Land me, I pray you, upon one of these islands, that I may have comfort in my dying hour."

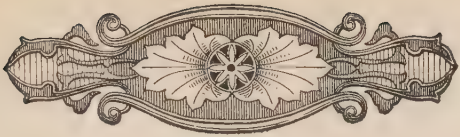
The pilot, whose rough nature had been touched with pity for the condition of the unfortunate astrologer, listened to his prayer and conveyed him to the shore, where he found the opinion he had given of the character of the coast to be correct. He laid him on the herbage in the shade, where the poor wanderer soon expired. The pilot then dug a grave at

the foot of a tree, where he buried him with all possible decency, and carved a cross on the bark to mark the grave.

Some time afterwards, Oviedo, the historian, was on the island with this very pilot, who showed him the cross on the tree, and gave his honest testimony to the good character and worthy conduct of Micer Codro. Oviedo, as he regarded the nameless grave, passed the eulogium of a scholar upon the poor astrologer: "He died," says he, "like Pliny, in the discharge of his duties, travelling about the world to explore the secrets of nature." According to his account, the prediction of Micer Codro held good with respect to Valenzuela, as it had in the case of Vasco Nuñez. The captain died within the term in which he had summoned him to appear before the tribunal of God!*

* *Vide* Oviedo, *Hist. Gen.*, lib. xxxix., cap. 2.





JUAN PONCE DE LEON,

CONQUEROR OF PORTO RICO, AND DISCOVERER OF FLORIDA.

Chapter I.

RECONNOITRING EXPEDITION OF JUAN PONCE DE LEON TO THE ISLAND OF BORIQUEN.

[1508.]

MANY years had elapsed since the discovery and colonization of Hayti, yet its neighboring island of Boriquen, or as the Spaniards called it, St. Juan, (since named Porto Rico,) remained unexplored. It was beautiful to the eye as beheld from the sea, having lofty mountains clothed with forest trees of prodigious size and magnificent foliage. There were broad, fertile valleys also, always

fresh and green; for the frequent showers and abundant streams in these latitudes, and the absence of all wintry frosts, produced a perpetual verdure. Various ships had occasionally touched at the island, but their crews had never penetrated into the interior. It was evident however from the number of hamlets and scattered houses, and the smoke rising in all directions from among the trees, that it was well peopled. The inhabitants still continued to enjoy their life of indolence and freedom, unmolested by the ills that overwhelmed the neighboring island of Hayti. The time had arrived however when they were to share the common lot of their fellow savages, and to sink beneath the yoke of the white man.

At the time when Nicholas de Ovando, Governor of Hispaniola, undertook to lay waste the great province of Higuey, which lay at the eastern end of Hayti, he sent as commander of part of the troops, a veteran soldier, named Juan Ponce de Leon. He was a native of Leon in Spain, and in his boyhood had been page to Pedro Nuñez de Guzman, Señor of Toral.* From an early age he had been schooled to war, and had served in various campaigns against the Moors of Granada. He accompa-

* Incas, Garcilaso de la Vega, *Hist. Florida*, tom. iv., cap. 37.

nied Columbus in his second voyage in 1493, and was afterwards, it is said, one of the partisans of Francisco Roldan in his rebellion against the Admiral. Having distinguished himself in various battles with the Indians, and acquired a name for sagacity as well as valor, he received a command subordinate to Juan de Esquibel in the campaign against Higuey, and seconded his chief so valiantly in that sanguinary expedition, that after the subjugation of the province he was appointed to the command of it, as lieutenant of the Governor of Hispaniola.

Juan Ponce de Leon had all the impatience of quiet life and the passion for exploit of a veteran campaigner. He had not been long in the tranquil command of his province of Higuey, before he began to cast a wistful eye towards the green mountains of Boriquen. They were directly opposite, and but twelve or fourteen leagues distant, so as to be distinctly seen in the transparent atmosphere of the tropics. The Indians of the two islands frequently visited each other, and in this way Juan Ponce received the usual intelligence, that the mountains he had eyed so wistfully abounded with gold. He readily obtained permission from Governor Ovando to make an expedition to this island, and embarked in the year 1508 in a caravel,

with a few Spaniards and several Indian interpreters and guides.

After an easy voyage he landed on the woody shores of the island, near the residence of the principal cacique, Agueybanà. He found the chieftain seated in patriarchal style under the shade of his native groves, and surrounded by his family, consisting of his mother, step-father, brother, and sister, who vied with each other in paying homage to the strangers. Juan Ponce, in fact, was received into the bosom of the family, and the cacique exchanged names with him, which is the Indian pledge of perpetual amity. Juan Ponce also gave Christian names to the mother and step-father of the cacique, and would fain have baptized them, but they declined the ceremony, though they always took a pride in the names thus given them.

In the zeal to gratify his guests the cacique took them to various parts of the island. They found the interior to correspond with the external appearance. It was wild and mountainous but magnificently wooded, with deep rich valleys fertilized by limpid streams. Juan Ponce requested the cacique to reveal to him the riches of the island. The simple Indian showed him his most productive fields of *yucca*, groves laden with delicious fruit, the sweetest and pur-

est fountains, and the coolest runs of water.

Ponce de Leon heeded but little these real blessings, and demanded whether the island produced no gold. Upon this the cacique conducted him to two rivers, the Manatuabon and the Zebuco, where the very pebbles seemed richly veined with gold, and large grains shone among the sands through the limpid water. Some of the largest of these were gathered by the Indians and given to the Spaniards. The quantity thus procured confirmed the hopes of Juan Ponce; and leaving several of his companions in the house of the hospitable cacique, he returned to Hayti to report the success of his expedition. He presented the specimens of gold to the Governor Ovando, who assayed them in a crucible. The ore was not so fine as that of Hispaniola, but as it was supposed to exist in greater quantities, the Governor determined on the subjugation of the island, and confided the enterprise to Juan Ponce de Leon.

Chapter III.

JUAN PONCE ASPIRES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PORTO RICO.

[1509.]

THE natives of Boriquen were more warlike than those of Hispaniola, being accustomed to

the use of arms from the necessity of repelling the frequent invasions of the Caribs. It was supposed therefore that the conquest of their island would be attended with some difficulty; and Juan Ponce de Leon made another, and as it were, a preparatory visit, to make himself acquainted with the country and with the nature and resources of the inhabitants. He found the companions whom he had left there on his former visit in good health and spirits, and full of gratitude towards the cacique Agueybanà, who had treated them with undiminished hospitality. There appeared to be no need of violence to win the island from such simple-hearted and confiding people. Juan de Ponce flattered himself with the hopes of being appointed to its government by Ovando, and of bringing it peacefully into subjection. After remaining some time on the island he returned to San Domingo to seek the desired appointment, but to his surprise found the whole face of affairs had changed during his absence.

His patron, the Governor Ovando, had been recalled to Spain, and Don Diego Columbus, son of the renowned discoverer, appointed in his place to the command of San Domingo. To add to the perplexities of Juan Ponce, a cavalier had already arrived from Spain, em-

powered by the King to form a settlement and build a fortress on the island of Porto Rico. His name was Christoval de Sotomayor; he was brother to the Count of Camina, and had been secretary to Philip I., surnamed The Handsome, King of Castile and father of Charles V.

Don Diego Columbus was highly displeased with the act of the King in granting these powers to Sotomayor, as it had been done without his knowledge and consent, and of course in disregard of his prerogative as viceroy, to be consulted as to all appointments made within his jurisdiction. He refused therefore to put Sotomayor in possession of the island. He paid as little respect to the claims of Juan Ponce de Leon, whom he regarded with an ungracious eye as a favorite of his predecessor Ovando. To settle the matter effectually he exerted what he considered his official and hereditary privilege, and chose officers to suit himself, appointing one Juan Ceron to the government of Porto Rico, and Miguel Diaz to serve as his lieutenant.*

* If the reader has perused the history of Columbus, he may remember the romantic adventure of this Miguel Diaz with a female cacique, which led to the discovery of the gold mines of Hayna and the founding of the city of San Domingo.

Juan Ponce de Leon, and his rival candidate Christoval de Sotomayor, bore their disappointment with a good grace. Though the command was denied them, they still hoped to improve their fortunes on the island, and accordingly joined the crowd of adventurers that accompanied the newly appointed governor.

New changes soon took place in consequence of the jealousies and misunderstandings between King Ferdinand and the Admiral as to points of privilege. The former still seemed disposed to maintain the rights of making appointments without consulting Don Diego, and exerted it in the present instance; for when Ovando, on his return to Spain, made favorable representation of the merits of Juan Ponce de Leon, and set forth his services in exploring Porto Rico, the King appointed him governor of that island and signified specifically that Don Diego Columbus should not presume to displace him.

Chapter III.

JUAN PONCE RULES WITH A STRONG HAND—EXASPERATION OF THE INDIANS—THEIR EXPERIMENT TO PROVE WHETHER THE SPANIARDS WERE MORTAL.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON assumed the command of the island of Boriquen in the year 1509. Being a fiery, high-handed old soldier, his first

step was to quarrel with Juan Ceron and Miguel Diaz, the ex-governor and his lieutenant, and to send them prisoners to Spain.*

He was far more favorable to his late competitor, Christoval de Sotomayor. Finding him to be a cavalier of noble blood and high connections, yet void of pretension, and of most accommodating temper, he offered to make him his lieutenant, and to give him the post of alcalde mayor, an offer which was very thankfully accepted.

The pride of rank however, which follows a man even into the wilderness, soon interfered with the quiet of Sotomayor; he was ridiculed for descending so much below his birth and dignity, as to accept a subaltern situation to a simple gentleman in the island which he had originally aspired to govern. He could not withstand these sneers, but resigned his appointment, and remained on the island as a private individual; establishing himself in the village where he had a large *repartimiento*, or allotment of Indians, assigned to him by a grant from the King.

Juan Ponce fixed his seat of government in a town called Caparra, which he founded on the northern side of the island, about a league from the sea, in a neighborhood supposed to

* Herrera, decad. i., lib. vii., cap. 13.

abound in gold. It was in front of the port called Rico, which subsequently gave its name to the island. The road to the town was up a mountain, through a dense forest, and so rugged and miry that it was the bane of man and beast. It cost more to convey provisions and merchandise up this league of mountain, than it did to bring them from Spain.

Juan Ponce, being firmly seated in his government, began to carve and portion out the island, to found towns, and to distribute the natives into *repartimientos*, for the purpose of exacting their labor.

The poor Indians soon found the difference between the Spaniards as guests and the Spaniards as masters. They were driven to despair by the heavy tasks imposed upon them ; for to their free spirits and indolent habits, restraint and labor were worse than death. Many of the most hardy and daring proposed a general insurrection, and a massacre of their oppressors ; the great mass however were deterred by the belief that the Spaniards were supernatural beings, and could not be killed.

A shrewd and sceptical cacique, named Brayoan, determined to put their immortality to the test. Hearing that a young Spaniard, named Salzedo, was passing through his lands, he sent a party of his subjects to escort him,

giving them secret instructions how they were to act. On coming to a river, they took Salzedo on their shoulders to carry him across, but when in the midst of the stream, they let him fall, and throwing themselves upon him, pressed him under water until he was drowned. Then dragging his body to the shore, and still doubting his being dead, they wept and howled over him, making a thousand apologies for having fallen upon him, and kept him so long beneath the surface.

The cacique Brayoan came to examine the body, and pronounced it lifeless; but the Indians, still fearing it might possess lurking immortality and ultimately revive, kept watch over it for three days, until it showed incontestable signs of putrefaction.

Being now convinced that the strangers were mortal men, like themselves, they readily entered into a general conspiracy to destroy them.*

Chapter IV.

CONSPIRACY OF THE CACIQUES—FATE OF SOTOMAYOR.

THE prime mover of the conspiracy among the natives was Agueybanà, brother and successor to the hospitable cacique of the same name, who had first welcomed the Spaniards

* Herrera, decad. i., lib. viii., cap. 13.

to the island, and who had fortunately closed his eyes in peace before his native groves were made the scenes of violence and oppression. The present cacique had fallen within the *repartimiento* of Don Christoval de Sotomayor, and, though treated by that cavalier with kindness, could never reconcile his proud spirit to the yoke of vassalage.

Agueybanà held secret councils with his confederate caciques, in which they concerted a plan of operations. As the Spaniards were scattered about in different places, it was agreed that at a certain time each cacique should despatch those within his province. In arranging the massacre of those within his own domains, Agueybanà assigned to one of his inferior caciques the task of surprising the village of Sotomayor, giving him three thousand warriors for the purpose. He was to assail the village in the dead of night, to set fire to the houses, and to slaughter all the inhabitants. He proudly however reserved to himself the honor of killing Don Christoval with his own hand.

Don Christoval had an unsuspected friend in the very midst of his enemies. Being a cavalier of gallant appearance and amiable and courteous manners, he had won the affections of an Indian princess, the sister of the cacique

Agueybanà. She had overheard enough of the war-council of her brother and his warriors to learn that Sotomayor was in danger. The life of her lover was more precious in her eyes than the safety of her brother and her tribe; hastening therefore to him, she told him all that she knew or feared, and warned him to be upon his guard. Sotomayor appears to have been of the most easy and incautious nature, void of all evil and deceit himself and slow to suspect anything of the kind in others. He considered the apprehension of the princess as dictated by her fond anxiety, and neglected to profit by her warning.

He received however, about the same time, information from a different quarter tending to the same point. A Spaniard versed in the language and customs of the natives, had observed a number gathering one evening, painted and decorated as if for battle. Suspecting some lurking mischief he stripped and painted himself in their manner, and, favored by the obscurity of the night, succeeded in mingling among them undiscovered. They were assembled round a fire, performing one of their mystic war-dances, to the chant of an *areyto* or legendary ballad. The strophes and responses treated of revenge and slaughter, and repeatedly mentioned the death of Sotomayor.

The Spaniard withdrew unperceived and hastened to apprise Don Christoval of his danger. The latter still made light of these repeated warnings; revolving them however in his mind in the stillness of the night, he began to feel some uneasiness, and determined to repair in the morning to Juan Ponce de Leon in his stronghold at Caparra. With his fated heedlessness or temerity, however, he applied to Agueybanà for Indians to carry his baggage, and departed slightly armed and accompanied by but three Spaniards, although he had to pass through close and lonely forests where he would be at the mercy of any treacherous or lurking foe.

The cacique watched the departure of his intended victim and set out very shortly afterwards, dogging his steps at a distance through the forest accompanied by a few chosen warriors. Agueybanà and his party had not proceeded far when they met a Spaniard named Juan Gonzalez, who spoke the Indian language. They immediately assailed and wounded him in several places. He threw himself at the feet of the cacique, imploring his life in the most abject terms. The chief spared him for the moment, being eager to make sure of Don Christoval. He overtook that incautious cavalier in the very heart of the woodland, and

stealing silently upon him, burst forth suddenly with his warriors from the covert of the thickets, giving the fatal war-whoop. Before Sotomayor could put himself upon his guard, a blow from the war-club of the cacique felled him to the earth, when he was quickly despatched by repeated blows. The three Spaniards who accompanied him shared his fate, being assailed, not merely by the warriors who had come in pursuit of them, but by their own Indian guides.

When Agueybanà had glutted his vengeance on this unfortunate cavalier he returned in quest of Juan Gonzalez. The latter, however, had recovered sufficiently from his wounds to leave the place where he had been assailed, and dreading the return of the savages had climbed into a tree and concealed himself among the branches. From thence with trembling anxiety he watched his pursuers as they searched all the surrounding forest for him. Fortunately, they did not think of looking up into the trees, but after beating the bushes for some time gave up the search. Though he saw them depart he did not venture from his concealment until the night had closed ; he then descended from the tree and made the best of his way to the residence of certain Spaniards, where his wounds were dressed. When this

was done he waited not to take repose, but repaired by a circuitous route to Caparra, and informed Juan Ponce de Leon of the danger he supposed to be still pending over Sotomayor, for he knew not that the enemy had accomplished his death. Juan Ponce immediately sent out forty men to his relief. They came to the scene of massacre, where they found the body of the unfortunate cavalier, partly buried, but with the feet out of the earth.

In the meantime the savages had accomplished the destruction of the village of Sotomayor. They approached it unperceived through the surrounding forest, and, entering it in the dead of the night, set fire to the straw-thatched houses, and attacked the Spaniards as they endeavored to escape from the flames.

Several were slain at the onset, but a brave Spaniard named Diego de Salazar, rallied his countrymen, inspirited them to beat off the enemy, and succeeded in conducting the greater part of them, though sorely mangled and harassed, to the stronghold of the Governor of Caparra. Scarcely had these fugitives gained the fortress when others came hurrying in from all quarters, bringing similar tales of conflagration and massacre. For once a general insurrection, so often planned in savage life against the domination of the white men,

was crowned with success. All the villages founded by the Spaniards had been surprised, about a hundred of their inhabitants destroyed, and the survivors driven to take refuge in a beleaguered fortress.

Chapter V.

WAR OF JUAN PONCE WITH THE CACIQUE AGUEYBANÀ.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON might now almost be considered a governor without territories, and a general without soldiers. His villages were smoking ruins, and his whole force did not amount to a hundred men, several of whom were disabled by their wounds. He had an able and implacable foe in Agueybanà, who took the lead of all the other caciques, and even sent envoys to the Caribs of the neighboring islands, entreating them to forget all ancient animosities, and to make common cause against these strangers—the deadly enemies of the whole Indian race. In the meantime the whole of this wild island was in rebellion, and the forest around the fortress of Caparra rang with the whoops and yells of the savages, the blasts of their war-conches, and the stormy roaring of their drums.

Juan Ponce was a stanch and wary old soldier, and not easily daunted. He remained grimly ensconced within his fortress, whence he despatched messengers in all haste to Hispaniola, imploring immediate assistance. In the meantime he tasked his wits to divert the enemy, and keep them at bay. He divided his little force into three bodies of about thirty men each, under the command of Diego Salazar, Miguel de Toro, and Luis de Anasco, and sent them out alternately to make surprises and assaults, to form ambuscades, and to practise the other stratagems of partisan warfare, which he had learnt in early life in his campaigns against the Moors of Granada.

One of his most efficient warriors was a dog named Berezillo,* renowned for courage, strength, and sagacity. It is said that he could distinguish those of the Indians who were allies from those who were enemies of the Spaniards. To the former he was docile and friendly, to the

* This famous dog was killed some years afterwards by a poisoned arrow, as he was swimming in the sea in pursuit of a Carib Indian. He left, however, a numerous progeny and a great name behind him; and his merits and exploits were long a favorite theme among the Spanish colonists. He was father to the renowned Leoncico, the faithful dog of Vasco Nuñez, which resembled him in looks and equalled him in prowess.

latter fierce and implacable. He was the terror of the natives, who were unaccustomed to powerful and ferocious animals, and did more service in this wild warfare than could have been rendered by several soldiers. His prowess was so highly appreciated, that his master received for him the pay, allowance, and share of booty assigned to a crossbow-man, which was the highest stipend given.

At length the stout old cavalier Juan Ponce was reinforced in his stronghold by troops from Hispaniola, whereupon he sallied forth boldly to take revenge upon those who had thus held him in a kind of durance. His foe Agueybanà was at that time encamped in his own territories with more than five thousand warriors, but in a negligent and unwatchful state, for he knew nothing of the reinforcements of the Spaniards, and supposed Juan Ponce shut up with his handful of men in Caparra. The old soldier therefore took him completely by surprise, and routed him with great slaughter. Indeed, it is said the Indians were struck with a kind of panic when they saw the Spaniards as numerous as ever, notwithstanding the number they had massacred. Their belief in their immortality revived, they fancied that those whom they had slain had returned to life, and they despaired of victory over beings who could thus arise with

renovated vigor from the grave. Various petty actions and skirmishes afterwards took place, in which the Indians were defeated. Agueybanà, however, disdained this petty warfare, and stirred up his countrymen to assemble their forces, and by one grand assault to decide the fate of themselves and their island. Juan Ponce received secret tidings of their intent, and of the place where they were assembling. He had at that time barely eighty men at his disposal, but they were cased in steel and proof against the weapons of the savages. Without stopping to reflect, the high-mettled old cavalier put himself at their head, and led them through the forest in quest of the foe.

It was nearly sunset when he came in sight of the Indian camp, and the multitude of warriors assembled there made him pause and almost repent of his temerity. He was as shrewd however as he was hardy and resolute. Ordering some of his men in the advance to skirmish with the enemy, he hastily threw up a slight fortification with the assistance of the rest. When it was finished he withdrew his forces into it and ordered them to keep merely on the defensive. The Indians made repeated attacks, but were as often repulsed with loss. Some of the Spaniards, impatient of this covert warfare, would sally forth in open field with pike and

crossbow, but were called back within the fortification by their wary commander.

The cacique Agueybanà was enraged at finding his host of warriors thus baffled and kept at bay by a mere handful of Spaniards. He beheld the night closing in and feared that in the darkness the enemy would escape. Summoning his choicest warriors round him therefore he led the way in a general assault, when, as he approached the fortress, he received a mortal wound from an arquebuse and fell dead upon the spot.

The Spaniards were not aware at first of the importance of the chief whom they had slain. They soon surmised it however from the confusion among the enemy, who bore off the body with great lamentations, and made no further attack.

The wary Juan Ponce took advantage of the evident distress of the foe to draw off his small forces in the night, happy to get out of the terrible jeopardy into which a rash confidence had betrayed him. Some of his fiery, spirited officers would have kept the field in spite of the overwhelming force of the enemy. "No, no," said the shrewd veteran, "it is better to protract the war than to risk all upon a single battle."

While Juan Ponce de Leon was fighting hard

to maintain his sway over the island, his transient dignity was overturned by another power, against which the prowess of the old soldier was of no avail. King Ferdinand had repented of the step he had ill-advisedly taken, in superseding the governor and lieutenant-governor appointed by Don Diego Columbus. He became convinced, though rather tardily, that it was an infringement of the rights of the Admiral, and that policy as well as justice required him to retract it. When Juan Ceron and Miguel Diaz, therefore, came prisoners to Spain, he received them graciously, conferred many favors on them to atone for their rough ejectment from office, and finally, after some time, sent them back empowered to resume the command of the island. They were ordered however on no account to manifest rancor or ill-will against Ponce de Leon, or to interfere with any property he might hold, either in houses, lands, or Indians, but on the contrary to cultivate the most friendly understanding with him. The King also wrote to the hardy veteran, explaining to him that his restitution of Ceron and Diaz had been determined upon in council as a mere act of justice due to them, but was not intended as a censure upon his conduct, and that means should be sought to indemnify him for the loss of his command.

By the time that the Governor and his lieutenant reached the island Juan Ponce had completed its subjugation. The death of the island champion, the brave Agueybanà, had in fact been a death-blow to the natives, and shows how much, in savage warfare, depends upon a single chieftain. They never made head of war afterwards, but dispersing among their forests and mountains, fell gradually under the power of the Spaniards. Their subsequent fate was like that of their neighbors of Hayti. They were employed in the labor of the mines and in other rude toils, so repugnant to their nature that they sank beneath them, and in a little while almost all the aboriginals disappeared from the island.

Chapter VII.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON HEARS OF A WONDERFUL COUNTRY AND MIRACULOUS FOUNTAIN.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON resigned the command of Porto Rico with tolerable grace. The loss of one wild island and wild government was of little moment when there was a new world to be shared out, where a bold soldier like himself, with sword and buckler, might readily carve out new fortunes for himself. Besides, he had

now amassed wealth to assist him in his plans, and, like many of the early discoverers, his brain was teeming with the most romantic enterprises. He had conceived the idea that there was yet a third world to be discovered, and he hoped to be the first to reach its shores and thus secure a renown equal to that of Columbus.

While cogitating these things and considering which way he should strike forth in the unexplored regions around him, he met with some old Indians who gave him tidings of a country which promised not merely to satisfy the cravings of his ambition, but to realize the fondest dreams of the poets. They assured him that far to the north there existed a land abounding in gold and in all manner of delights; but, above all, possessing a river of such wonderful virtue that whoever bathed in it would be restored to youth! They added that in times past, before the arrival of the Spaniards, a large party of the natives of Cuba had departed northward in search of this happy land and this river of life, and having never returned, it was concluded that they were flourishing in renovated youth, detained by the pleasures of that enchanting country.

Here was the dream of the alchemist realized! One had but to find this gifted land and revel in the enjoyment of boundless riches and peren-

nial youth! Nay, some of the ancient Indians declared that it was not necessary to go so far in quest of these rejuvenating waters, for that in a certain island of the Bahama group, called Bimini, which lay far out in the ocean, there was a fountain possessing the same marvellous and inestimable qualities.

Juan Ponce de Leon listened to these tales with fond credulity. He was advancing in life, and the ordinary term of existence seemed insufficient for his mighty plans. Could he but plunge into this marvellous fountain or gifted river, and come out with his battered, war-worn body restored to the strength and freshness and suppleness of youth, and his head still retaining the wisdom and knowledge of age, what enterprises might he not accomplish in the additional course of vigorous years insured to him!

It may seem incredible at the present day that a man of years and experience could yield any faith to a story which resembles the wild fiction of an Arabian tale; but the wonders and novelties breaking upon the world in that age of discovery almost realized the illusions of fable, and the imaginations of the Spanish voyagers had become so heated, that they were capable of any stretch of credulity.

So fully persuaded was the worthy old cavalier of the existence of the region described to

him, that he fitted out three ships at his own expense to prosecute the discovery, nor had he any difficulty in finding adventurers in abundance ready to cruise with him in quest of this fairy-land.*

* It was not the credulous minds of voyagers and adventurers alone that were heated by these Indian traditions and romantic fables. Men of learning and eminence were likewise beguiled by them. Witness the following extract from the second decad. of Peter Martyr, addressed to Leo X., then Bishop of Rome.

"Among the islands on the north side of Hispaniola there is one about 325 leagues distant, as they say which have searched the same, in the which is a continual spring of running water, of such marvellous virtue, that the water thereof being drunk, perhaps with some diet, maketh olde men young again. And here I must make protestation to your holiness not to think this to be said lightly or rashly, for they have so spread this rumor for a truth throughout all the court, that not only all the people, but also many of them whom wisdom or fortune hath divided from the common sort, think it to be true; but, if you will ask my opinion herein, I will answer, that I will not attribute so great power to nature, but that God hath no lesse reserved this prerogative to himself than to search the hearts of men," etc.—P. Martyr, decad. ii., cap. 10, Lok's translation.

Chapter VIII.

CRUISE OF PONCE DE LEON IN SEARCH OF THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

[1512.]

It was on the 3d of March, 1512, that Juan Ponce sailed with his three ships from the port of St. Germain in the island of Porto Rico. He kept for some distance along the coast of Hispaniola, and then stretching away to the northward, made for the Bahama Islands, and soon fell in with the first of the group. He was favored with propitious weather and tranquil seas, and glided smoothly with wind and current along that verdant archipelago, visiting one island after another until, on the 14th of the month, he arrived at Guanahani, or San Salvador, where Christopher Columbus had first put his foot on the shores of the New World. His inquiries for the island of Bimini were all in vain, and as to the fountain of youth, he may have drunk of every fountain, and river, and lake in the archipelago, even to the salt pools of Turk's Island, without being a whit the younger.

Still he was not discouraged; but having repaired his ships, he again put to sea and shaped his course to the northwest. On Sunday, the 27th of March, he came in sight of what he

supposed to be an island, but was prevented from landing by adverse weather. He continued hovering about it for several days, buffeted by the elements, until in the night of the 2d of April, he succeeded in coming to anchor under the land, in thirty degrees eight minutes of latitude. The whole country was in the fresh bloom of spring; the trees were gay with blossoms, and the fields covered with flowers; from which circumstance, as well as from having discovered it on Palm Sunday (Pascua Florida), he gave it the name of Florida, which it retains to the present day. The Indian name of the country was Cautio.*

Juan Ponce landed and took possession of the country in the name of the Castilian sovereigns. He afterwards continued for several weeks ranging the coast of this flowery land, and struggling against the Gulf Stream and the various currents which sweep it. He doubled Cape Cañaveral, and reconnoitred the southern and eastern shores without suspecting that this was a part of Terra Firma. In all his attempts to explore the country, he met with resolute and implacable hostility on the part of the natives, who appeared to be a fierce and warlike race. He was disappointed also in his hopes of finding gold, nor did any of the rivers or

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. i., lib. ix., cap. 10.

fountains which he examined possess the rejuvenating virtue. Convinced, therefore, that this was not the promised land of Indian tradition, he turned his prow homeward on the 14th of June, with the intention, on the way, of making one more attempt to find the island of Bimini.

In the outset of his return he discovered a group of islets abounding with sea-fowl and marine animals. On one of them his sailors, in the course of a single night, caught one hundred and seventy turtles, and might have taken many more had they been so inclined. They likewise took fourteen sea-wolves, and killed a vast quantity of pelicans and other birds. To this group Juan Ponce gave the name of the Tortugas, or Turtles, which they still retain.

Proceeding in his cruise, he touched at another group of islets near the Lucayos to which he gave the name of La Vieja, or the Old Woman group, because he found no inhabitants there but one old Indian woman.* This ancient sibyl he took on board his ship to give him information about the labyrinth of islands into which he was entering, and perhaps he could not have had a more suitable guide in the eccentric quest he was making. Notwithstanding her pilotage, however, he was exceedingly baffled and perplexed in his return voyage

* Herrera, decad. i., lib. ix.

among the Bahama Islands, for he was forcing his way as it were against the course of nature, and encountering the currents which sweep westward along these islands, and the trade-wind which accompanies them. For a long time he struggled with all kinds of difficulties and dangers; and was obliged to remain upwards of a month on one of the islands to repair the damages which his ship had suffered in a storm.

Disheartened at length by the perils and trials with which nature seemed to have beset the approach to Bimini, as to some fairy island in romance, he gave up the quest in person and sent in his place a trusty captain, Juan Perez de Ortubia, who departed in one of the other ships, guided by the experienced old woman of the isles and by another Indian. As to Juan Ponce, he made the best of his way back to Porto Rico, where he arrived infinitely poorer in purse and wrinkled in brow by this cruise after inexhaustible riches and perpetual youth.

He had not been long in port when his trusty envoy, Juan Perez, likewise arrived. Guided by the sage old woman, he had succeeded in finding the long-sought-for Bimini. He described it as being large, verdant, and covered with beautiful groves. There were crystal springs and limpid streams in abundance, which

kept the island in perpetual verdure, but none that could restore to an old man the vernal greenness of his youth.

Thus ended the romantic expedition of Juan Ponce de Leon. Like many other pursuits of a chimera, it terminated in the acquisition of a substantial good. Though he had failed in finding the fairy fountain of youth, he had discovered in place of it the important country of Florida.*

Chapter VIII.

EXPEDITION OF JUAN PONCE AGAINST THE CARIBS —HIS DEATH.

[1514.]

JUAN PONCE DE LEON now repaired to Spain to make a report of his voyage to King Ferdi-

* The belief of the existence in Florida of a river like that sought by Juan Ponce, was long prevalent among the Indians of Cuba, and the caciques were anxious to discover it. That a party of the natives of Cuba once went in search of it and remained there, appears to be a fact, as their descendants were afterwards to be traced among the people of Florida. Las Casas says, that, even in his days, many persisted in seeking this mystery, and some thought that the river was no other than that called the Jordan, at the point of St. Helena, without considering that the name was that given to it by the Spaniards in the year 1520, when they discovered the land of Chicora.

nand. The hardy old cavalier experienced much raillery from the witlings of the court, on account of his visionary voyage, though many wise men had been as credulous as himself at the outset. The King, however, received him with great favor, and conferred upon him the title of Adelantado of Bimini and Florida, which last was as yet considered an island. Permission was also granted him to recruit men either in Spain or in the colonies for a settlement in Florida; but he deferred entering on his command for the present, being probably discouraged and impoverished by the losses of his late expedition, or finding a difficulty in enlisting adventurers. At length another enterprise presented itself. The Caribs had by this time become a terror to the Spanish inhabitants of many of the islands, making descents upon the coast and carrying off captives, who it was supposed were doomed to be devoured by these cannibals. So frequent were their invasions of the island of Porto Rico, that it was feared they would ultimately oblige the Spaniards to abandon it.

King Ferdinand therefore, in 1514, ordered that three ships, well armed and manned, should be fitted out in Seville, destined to scour the islands of the Caribs and to free the seas

from those cannibal marauders. The command of the *armada* was given to Juan Ponce de Leon, from his knowledge of Indian warfare and his varied and rough experience, which had mingled in him the soldier with the sailor. He was instructed in the first place to assail the Caribs of those islands most contiguous and dangerous to Porto Rico, and then make war on those of the coast of Terra Firma, in the neighborhood of Carthagena. He was afterwards to take the captaincy of Porto Rico, and to attend to the *repartimientos* or distributions of the Indians, in conjunction with a person to be appointed by Diego Columbus.

The enterprise suited the soldier-like spirit of Juan Ponce de Leon, and the gallant old cavalier set sail full of confidence, in January, 1515, and steered direct for the Caribbees, with a determination to give a wholesome castigation to the whole savage archipelago. Arriving at the island of Guadaloupe, he cast anchor and sent men on shore for wood and water, and women to wash the clothing of the crews, with a party of soldiers to mount guard.

Juan Ponce had not been as wary as usual, for he had to deal with savages unusually adroit in warfare. While the people were scattered carelessly on the shore, the Caribs rushed forth

from an ambuscade, killed the greater part of the men, and carried off the women to the mountains.

This blow, at the very onset of his vaunted expedition, sank deep into the heart of Juan Ponce and put an end to all his military excitement. Humbled and mortified, he set sail for the island of Porto Rico, where he relinquished all further prosecution of the enterprise under the pretext of ill-health, and gave the command of the squadron to a captain named Zuñiga; but it is surmised that his malady was not so much of the flesh as of the spirit. He remained in Porto Rico as governor, but having grown testy and irritable through vexations and disappointments, he gave great offence and caused much contention on the island by positive and strong-handed measures in respect to the distribution of the Indians.

He continued for several years in that island in a state of growling repose, until the brilliant exploits of Hernando Cortez, which threatened to eclipse the achievements of all the veteran discoverers, roused his dormant spirit.

Jealous of being cast into the shade in his old days, he determined to sally forth on one more expedition. He had heard that Florida, which he had discovered and which he had hitherto considered, a mere island, was part of

Terra Firma, possessing vast and unknown regions in its bosom. If so, a grand field of enterprise lay before him, wherein he might make discoveries and conquests to rival, if not surpass, the far-famed conquest of Mexico.

Accordingly in the year 1521 he fitted out two ships at the island of Porto Rico and embarked almost the whole of his property in the undertaking. His voyage was toilsome and tempestuous, but at length he arrived at the wished-for land. He made a descent upon the coast with a great part of his men, but the Indians sallied forth with unusual valor to defend their shores. A bloody battle ensued ; several of the Spaniards were slain, and Juan Ponce was wounded by an arrow in the thigh. He was borne on board his ship, and finding himself disabled for further action, set sail for Cuba, where he arrived ill in body and dejected in heart.

He was of an age when there is no longer prompt and healthful reaction, either mental or corporeal. The irritations of humiliated pride and disappointed hope exasperated the fever of his wound, and he died soon after his arrival at the island. "Thus fate," says one of the quaint old Spanish writers, "delights to reverse the schemes of man. The discovery that Juan Ponce flattered himself was to lead

to a means of perpetuating his life, had the ultimate effect of hastening his death."

It may be said, however, that he had at least attained the shadow of his desire, since, though disappointed in extending the natural term of his existence, his discovery had insured a lasting duration to his name.

The following epitaph was inscribed upon his tomb, which does justice to the warrior qualities of the stout cavalier :

> Mole sub hac fortis requiescunt ossa Leonis
> Qui vicit factis nomina magna suis.

It has thus been paraphrased in Spanish by the Licentiate Juan de Castellanos :

> Aqueste lugar estrecho
> Es sepulchro del varon,
> Que en el nombre fue Leon,
> Y mucho mas en el hecho.

"In this sepulchre rest the bones of a man, who was a lion by name and still more by nature."

Appendix.

CONTAINING ILLUSTRATIONS AND DOCUMENTS.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

TRANSPORTATION OF THE REMAINS OF COLUMBUS FROM SAN DOMINGO TO HAVANA.

AT the termination of a war between France and Spain, in 1795, all the Spanish possessions in the island of Hispaniola were ceded to France, by the 9th article of the treaty of peace. To assist in the accomplishment of this session, a Spanish squadron was despatched to the island at the appointed time, commanded by Don Gabriel de Aristizabal, lieutenant-general of the royal *armada*. On the 11th December, 1795, that commander wrote to the Field-Marshal and Governor, Don Joaquin Garcia, resident at San Domingo, that, being informed that the remains of the celebrated Admiral Don Christopher Columbus lay in the cathedral of that city, he felt it incumbent upon him as a Span-

iard, and as commander-in-chief of His Majesty's squadron of operation, to solicit the translation of the ashes of that hero to the island of Cuba, which had likewise been discovered by him, and where he had first planted the standard of the cross. He expressed a desire that this should be done officially, and with great care and formality, that it might not remain in the power of any one, by a careless transportation of these honored remains, to lose a relic connected with an event which formed the most glorious epoch of Spanish history; and that it might be manifested to all nations, that Spaniards, notwithstanding the lapse of ages, never ceased to pay all honors to the remains of that "worthy and adventurous general of the seas"; nor abandoned them, when the various public bodies, representing the Spanish dominion, emigrated from the island. As he had not time, without great inconvenience, to consult the sovereign on this subject, he had recourse to the Governor, as royal vice-patron of the island, hoping that his solicitation might be granted, and the remains of the Admiral exhumed and conveyed to the island of Cuba, in the ship *San Lorenzo.*

The generous wishes of this high-minded Spaniard met with warm concurrence on the part of the Governor. He informed him in reply, that the Duke of Veraguas, lineal successor of Columbus, had manifested the same solicitude, and had sent directions

that the necessary measures should be taken at his expense; and had at the same time expressed a wish that the bones of the Adelantado, Don Bartholomew Columbus, should likewise be exhumed; transmitting inscriptions to be put upon the sepulchres of both. He added, that although the King had given no orders on the subject, yet the proposition being so accordant with the grateful feelings of the Spanish nation, and meeting with the concurrence of all the authorities of the island, he was ready on his part to carry it into execution.

The Commandant-General Aristizabal then made a similar communication to the Archbishop of Cuba, Don Fernando Portillo y Torres, whose metropolis was then the city of San Domingo, hoping to receive his countenance and aid in this pious undertaking.

The reply of the Archbishop was couched in terms of high courtesy towards the gallant commander, and deep reverence for the memory of Columbus, and expressed a zeal in rendering this tribute of gratitude and respect to the remains of one who had done so much for the glory of the nation.

The persons empowered to act for the Duke of Veraguas, the venerable dean and chapter of the cathedral, and all the other persons and authorities to whom Don Gabriel de Aristizabal made similar communications, manifested the same eagerness to assist in the performance of this solemn and affecting rite.

The worthy commander, Aristizabal, having taken all these preparatory steps with great form and punctilio, so that the ceremony should be performed in a public and striking manner, suitable to the fame of Columbus, the whole was carried into effect with becoming pomp and solemnity.

On the 20th December, 1795, the most distinguished persons of the place, the dignitaries of the Church, and civil and military officers, assembled in the metropolitan cathedral. In the presence of this august assemblage, a small vault was opened above the chancel, in the principal wall on the right side of the high altar. Within were found the fragments of a leaden coffin, a number of bones, and a quantity of mould, evidently the remains of a human body. These were carefully collected and put in a case of gilded lead, about half an ell in length and breadth, and a third in heighth, secured by an iron lock, the key of which was delivered to the Archbishop. The case was enclosed in a coffin covered with black velvet and ornamented with lace and fringe of gold. The whole was then placed in a temporary tomb or mausoleum.

On the following day there was another grand convocation at the cathedral, when the vigils and masses for the dead were solemnly chanted by the Archbishop, accompanied by the Commandant-General of the *armada*, the Dominican and Franciscan friars, and the friars of the Order of Mercy, together with the rest

of the distinguished assemblage. After this a funeral sermon was preached by the Archbishop.

On the same day, at four o'clock in the afternoon, the coffin was transported to the ship with the utmost state and ceremony, with a civil, religious, and military procession, banners wrapped in mourning, chants and responses and discharges of artillery. The most distinguished persons of the several orders took turn to support the coffin. The key was taken with great formality from the hands of the Archbishop by the Governor, and given into the hands of the commander of the *armada*, to be delivered by him to the Governor of Havana, to be held in deposit until the pleasure of the King should be known. The coffin was received on board of a brigantine called the *Discoverer*, which, with all the other shipping, displayed mourning signals, and saluted the remains with the honors paid to an Admiral.

From the port of San Domingo the coffin was conveyed to the bay of Ocoa and there transferred to the ship *San Lorenzo*. It was accompanied by a portrait of Columbus, sent from Spain by the Duke of Veraguas, to be suspended close by the place where the remains of his illustrious ancestor should be deposited.

The ship immediately made sail and arrived at Havana in Cuba, on the 15th of January, 1796. Here the same deep feeling of reverence to the memory of the discoverer was evinced. The principal authorities re-

paired on board of the ship, accompanied by the superior naval and military officers. Everything was conducted with the same circumstantial and solemn ceremonial. The remains were removed with great reverence, and placed in a felucca, in which they were conveyed to land in the midst of a procession of three columns of feluccas and boats in the royal service, all properly decorated, containing distinguished military and ministerial officers. Two feluccas followed, in one of which was a marine guard of honor, with mourning banners and muffled drums; and in the other were the commandant-general, the principal minister of marine, and the military staff. In passing the vessels of war in the harbor, they all paid the honors due to an admiral and captain-general of the navy. On arriving at the Mole, the remains were met by the governor of the island, accompanied by the generals and the military staff. The coffin was then conveyed between files of soldiery which lined the streets to the obelisk, in the Place of Arms, where it was received in a hearse prepared for the purpose. Here the remains were formally delivered to the governor and captain-general of the island, the key given up to him, the coffin opened and examined, and the safe transportation of its contents authenticated. This ceremony being concluded, it was conveyed in grand procession and with the utmost pomp to the cathedral. Masses, and the solemn ceremonies of the dead were performed by the

bishop, and the mortal remains of Columbus deposited with great reverence in the wall on the right side of the grand altar. "All these honors and ceremonies," says the document, from whence this notice is digested,* "were attended by the ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries, the public bodies, and all the nobility and gentry of Havana, in proof of the high estimation and respectful remembrance in which they held the hero who had discovered the New World, and had been the first to plant the standard of the cross on that island."

This is the last occasion that the Spanish nation has had to testify its feelings towards the memory of Columbus, and it is with deep satisfaction that the author of this work has been able to cite at large a ceremonial so solemn, affecting, and noble in its details, and so honorable to the national character.

When we read of the remains of Columbus, thus conveyed from the port of San Domingo, after an interval of nearly three hundred years, as sacred national relics, with civic and military pomp, and high religious ceremonial; the most dignified and illustrious men striving who most should pay them reverence; we cannot but reflect that it was from this very port he was carried off loaded with ignominious chains, blasted apparently in fame and fortune, and followed by the revilings of the rabble. Such honors, it is true, are

* Navarrete, *Colec.*, tom. ii., p. 365.

nothing to the dead, nor can they atone to the heart, now dust and ashes, for all the wrongs and sorrows it may have suffered; but they speak volumes of comfort to the illustrious, yet slandered and persecuted living, encouraging them bravely to bear with present injuries, by showing them how true merit outlives all calumny, and receives its glorious reward in the admiration of after ages.

No. II.

NOTICE OF THE DESCENDANTS OF COLUMBUS.

On the death of Columbus his son Diego succeeded to his rights as viceroy and governor of the New World according to the express capitulations between the sovereigns and his father. He appears by the general consent of historians to have been a man of great integrity, of respectable talents, and of a frank and generous nature. Herrera speaks repeatedly of the gentleness and urbanity of his manners, and pronounces him of a noble disposition and without deceit. This absence of all guile frequently laid him open to the stratagems of crafty men, grown old in deception, who rendered his life a continued series of embarrassments; but the probity of his character, with the irresistible power of truth, bore him through difficulties in which more politic and subtle men would have been entangled and completely lost.

Immediately after the death of the Admiral, Don Diego came forward as lineal successor, and urged the restitution of the family offices and privileges, which had been suspended during the latter years of his father's life. If the cold and wary Ferdinand, however, could forget his obligations of gratitude and justice to Columbus, he had less difficulty in turning a deaf ear to the solicitations of his son. For two years Don Diego pressed his suit with fruitless diligence. He felt the apparent distrust of the monarch the more sensibly, from having been brought up under his eye as a page in the royal household, where his character ought to be well known and appreciated. At length, on the return of Ferdinand from Naples in 1508, he put to him a direct question, with the frankness attributed to his character. He demanded "why his majesty would not grant to him as a favor that which was his right, and why he hesitated to confide in the fidelity of one who had been reared in his house." Ferdinand replied that he could fully confide in him, but could not repose so great a trust at a venture in his children and successors. To this Don Diego rejoined, that it was contrary to all justice and reason to make him suffer for the sins of his children who might never be born.*

Still, though he had reason and justice on his side, the young Admiral found it impossible to bring the

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. ii., lib. vii., cap. 4.

wary monarch to a compliance. Finding all appeals of his ideas of equity or sentiments of generosity in vain, he solicited permission to pursue his claim in the ordinary course of law. The King could not refuse so reasonable a request, and Don Diego commenced a process against King Ferdinand before the Council of the Indies, founded on the repeated capitulations between the Crown and his father, and embracing all the dignities and immunities ceded by them.

One ground of opposition to these claims was, that if the capitulation made by the sovereigns in 1492, had granted a perpetual viceroyalty in the Admiral and his heirs, such grant could not stand; being contrary to the interest of the state and to an express law promulgated in Toledo in 1480; wherein it was ordained that no office involving the administration of justice should be given in perpetuity; that therefore the viceroyalty granted to the Admiral could only have been for his life; and that even during that term it had justly been taken from him for his misconduct. That such concessions were contrary to the inherent prerogatives of the Crown, of which the government could not divest itself. To this Don Diego replied, that as to the validity of the capitulation, it was a binding contract and none of its privileges ought to be restricted. That as by royal schedules dated in Villa Franca, June 2, 1506, and Almazan, August 28, 1507, it had been ordered that he, Don Diego, should receive the tenths, so

equally ought the other privileges to be accorded to him. As to the allegation that his father had been deprived of his viceroyalty for his demerits, it was contrary to all truth. It had been audacity on the part of Bobadilla to send him a prisoner to Spain in 1500, and contrary to the will and command of the sovereigns, as was proved by their letter dated from Valencia de la Torre in 1502, in which they expressed grief at his arrest and assured him that it should be redressed and his privileges guarded entire to himself and his children.*

This memorable suit was commenced in 1508, and continued for several years. In the course of it the claims of Don Diego were disputed likewise, on the plea that his father was not the original discoverer of Terra Firma, but only subsequently of certain portions of it. This, however, was completely controverted by overwhelming testimony. The claims of Don Diego were minutely discussed and rigidly examined; and the unanimous decision of the Council of the Indies in his favor, while it reflected honor on the justice and independence of that body, silenced many petty cavillers at the fair fame of Columbus.† Notwithstanding this decision the wily monarch wanted neither means nor pretexts to delay the ceding of such

* Extracts from the minutes of the process taken by the historian Muñoz, MS.

† Further mention will be found of this lawsuit in the article relative to Amerigo Vespucci.

vast powers, so repugnant to his cautious policy. The young Admiral was finally indebted for his success in this suit to previous success attained of a different nature. He had become enamored of Dona Maria de Toledo, daughter of Ferdinand de Toledo, Grand Commander of Leon, and niece to Don Fabrique de Toledo, the celebrated Duke of Alva, chief favorite of the King. This was aspiring to a high connection. The father and uncle of the lady were the most powerful grandees of the proud kingdom of Spain, and cousins-german to Ferdinand. The glory, however, which Columbus had left behind rested upon his children, and the claims of Don Diego, recently confirmed by the Council, involved dignities and wealth sufficient to raise him to a level with the loftiest alliance. He found no difficulty in obtaining the hand of the lady, and thus was the foreign family of Columbus ingrafted on one of the proudest races of Spain. The natural consequences followed. Diego had secured that magical power called " connection " ; and the favor of Ferdinand which had been so long withheld from him as the son of Columbus, shone upon him, though coldly, as the nephew of the Duke of Alva. The father and uncle of his bride succeeded, though with great difficulty, in conquering the repugnance of the monarch, and after all he but granted in part the justice they required. He ceded to Don Diego merely the dignities and powers enjoyed by Nicholas de Ovando, who

was recalled; and he cautiously withheld the title of viceroy.

The recall of Ovando was not merely a measure to make room for Don Diego, it was the tardy performance of a promise made to Isabella on her death-bed. The expiring Queen had demanded it as a punishment for the massacre of her poor Indian subjects at Xaragua, and the cruel and ignominious execution of the female cacique Anacaona. Thus retribution was continually going its rounds in the checkered destinies of this island, which has ever presented a little epitome of human history; its errors and crimes and consequent disasters.

In complying with the request of the Queen, however, Ferdinand was favorable towards Ovando. He did not feel the same generous sympathies with his late consort, and, however Ovando had sinned against humanity in his treatment of the Indians, he had been a vigilant officer, and his very oppressions had in general proved profitable to the Crown. Ferdinand directed that the fleet which took out the new governor should return under the command of Ovando, and that he should retain undisturbed enjoyment of any property or Indian slaves that might be found in his possession. Some have represented Ovando as a man far from mercenary; that the wealth wrung from the miseries of the natives was for his sovereigns, not for himself; and it is intimated that one secret cause of

his disgrace was his having made an enemy of the all powerful and unforgiving Fonseca.*

The new Admiral embarked at St. Lucar, June 9, 1509, with his wife, his brother Don Fernando, who was now grown to man's estate and had been well educated, and his two uncles Don Bartholomew and Don Diego. They were accompanied by a numerous retinue of cavaliers, with their wives, and of young ladies of rank and family, more distinguished, it is hinted, for high blood than large fortune, and who were sent out to find wealthy husbands in the New World.†

Though the King had not granted Don Diego the dignity of viceroy, the title was generally given to him by courtesy, and his wife was universally addressed by that of vice-queen.

Don Diego commenced his rule with a degree of splendor hitherto unknown in the colony. The vice-queen, who was a lady of great desert, surrounded by the noble cavaliers and the young ladies of family who had come in her retinue, established a sort of court which threw a degree of lustre over the half savage island. The young ladies were soon married to the wealthiest colonists, and contributed greatly to soften those rude manners which had grown up in a state of society hitherto destitute of the salutory

* Charlevoix, *ut supra*, v. i., p. 272, id. 274.
† Las Casas, lib. ii., cap. 49, MS.

restraint and pleasing decorum produced by female influence.

Don Diego had considered his appointment in the light of a viceroyalty, but the King soon took measures which showed that he admitted of no such pretension. Without any reference to Don Diego, he divided the coast of Darien into two great provinces, separated by an imaginary line running through the gulf of Uraba, appointed Alonso de Ojeda governor of the eastern province, which he called New Andalusia, and Diego de Nicuesa, governor of the western province, which included the rich coast of Veragua, and which he called Castilla del Oro, or Golden Castile. Had the monarch been swayed by principles of justice and gratitude, the settlement of this coast would have been given to the Adelantado, Don Bartholomew Columbus, who had assisted in the discovery of the country, and, together with his brother the Admiral, had suffered so greatly in the enterprise. Even his superior abilities for the task should have pointed him out to the policy of the monarch ; but the cautious and calculating Ferdinand knew the lofty spirit of the Adelantado, and that he would be disposed to demand high and dignified terms. He passed him by, therefore, and preferred more eager and accommodating adventurers.

Don Diego was greatly aggrieved at this measure, thus adopted without his participation or knowledge.

He justly considered it an infringement of the capitulations granted and repeatedly confirmed to his father and his heirs. He had futher vexations and difficulties with respect to the government of the island of St. Juan, or Porto Rico, which was conquered and settled about this time; but after a variety of cross purposes, the officers whom he appointed were ultimately recognized by the Crown.

Like his father, he had to contend with malignant factions in his government; for the enemies of the father transferred their enmity to the son. There was one Miguel Pasamonte, the King's treasurer, who became his avowed enemy, under the support and chiefly at the instigation of the Bishop Fonseca, who continued to the son the implacable hostility which he had manifested to the father. A variety of trivial circumstances contributed to embroil him with some of the petty officers of the colony, and there was a remnant of the followers of Roldan who arrayed themselves against him.*

Two factions soon arose in the island: one of the Admiral, the other of the treasurer, Pasamonte. The latter affected to call themselves the party of the King. They gave all possible molestation to Don Diego, and sent home the most virulent and absurd misrepresentations of his conduct. Among others, they represented a large house with many windows which he

* Herrera, decad. i., lib. vii., cap. 12.

was building, as intended for a fortress, and asserted that he had a design to make himself sovereign of the island. King Ferdinand who was now advancing in years, had devolved the affairs of the Indies in a great measure on Fonseca,* who had superintended them from the first, and he was greatly guided by the advice of that prelate, which was not likely to be favorable to the descendants of Columbus. The complaints from the colonies were so artfully enforced, therefore, that he established in 1510 a sovereign court at San Domingo, called the royal audience, to which an appeal might be made from all sentences of the Admiral, even in cases reserved hitherto exclusively for the Crown. Don Diego considered this a suspicious and injurious measure intended to demolish his authority.

Frank, open, and unsuspicious, the young Admiral was not formed for a contest with the crafty politicians arrayed against him, who were ready and adroit in seizing upon his slighest errors, and magnifying them into crimes. Difficulties were multiplied in his path which it was out of his power to overcome. He had entered upon office full of magnanimous intentions; determined to put an end to oppression, and correct all abuses; all good men therefore had rejoiced at his appointment; but he soon found that he had overrated his strength, and undervalued the difficulties awaiting

* Herrera, decad. i., lib. vii., cap. 12.

him. He calculated from his own good heart, but he had no idea of the wicked hearts of others. He was opposed to the *repartimientos* of Indians, that source of all kinds of inhumanity; but he found all the men of wealth in the colony, and most of the important persons of the court interested in maintaining them. He perceived that the attempt to abolish them would be dangerous, and the result questionable: at the same time this abuse was a source of immense profit to himself. Self-interest, therefore, combined with other considerations; and what at first appeared difficult, seemed presently impracticable. The *repartimientos* continued in the state in which he found them, excepting that he removed such of the superintendents as had been cruel and oppressive, and substituted men of his own appointment, who probably proved equally worthless. His friends were disappointed, his enemies encouraged; a hue and cry was raised against him by the friends of those he had displaced; and it was even said that if Ovando had not died about this time, he would have been sent out to supplant Don Diego.

The subjugation and settlement of the island of Cuba in 1510, was a fortunate event in the administration of the present Admiral. He congratulated King Ferdinand on having acquired the largest and most beautiful island in the world without losing a single man. The intelligence was highly acceptable to the King;

but it was accompanied by a great number of complaints against the Admiral. Little affection as Ferdinand felt for Don Diego, he was still aware that most of the representations were false, and had their origin in the jealousy and envy of his enemies. He judged it expedient, however, in 1512, to send out Don Bartholomew Columbus with minute instructions to his nephew the Admiral.

Don Bartholomew still retained the office of Adelantado of the Indies; although Ferdinand, through selfish motives, detained him in Spain, while he employed inferior men in voyages of discovery. He now added to his appointments the property and government of the little island of Mona during life, and assigned him a *repartimiento* of two hundred Indians, with the superintendency of the mines which might be discovered in Cuba; an office which proved very lucrative.*

Among the instructions given by the King to Don Diego, he directed that in consequence of the representations of the Dominican friars, the labor of the natives should be reduced to one third; that negro slaves should be procured from Guinea as a relief to the Indians †; and that Carib slaves should be branded on the leg, to prevent other Indians from being confounded with them and subjected to harsh treatment.‡

The two governors, Ojeda and Nicuesa, whom the

* Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Domingo*, p. 321.
† Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. i., lib. ix., cap. 5.
‡ *Idem*.

King had appointed to colonize and command at the isthmus of Darien, in Terra Firma, having failed in their undertaking, the sovereign, in 1514, wrote to Hispaniola, permitting the Adelantado, Don Bartholomew, if so inclined, to take charge of settling the coast of Veragua, and to govern that country under the Admiral Don Diego, conformably to his privileges. Had the King consulted his own interest, and the deference due to the talents and services of the Adelantado, this measure would have been taken at an earlier date. It was now too late. Illness prevented Don Bartholomew from executing the enterprise; and his active and toilsome life was drawing to a close.

Many calumnies having been sent home to Spain by Pasamonte and other enemies of Don Diego, and various measures being taken by government, which he conceived derogatory to his dignity, and injurious to his privileges, he requested and obtained permission to repair to court, that he might explain and vindicate his conduct. He departed, accordingly, on April 9, 1515, leaving the Adelantado with the vice-queen, Dona Maria. He was received with great honor by the King; and he merited such a reception. He had succeeded in every enterprise he had undertaken or directed. The pearl fishery had been successfully established on the coast of Cubagua; the islands of Cuba and of Jamaica had been subjected and brought under cultivation without bloodshed; his con-

duct as governor had been upright; and he had only excited the representations made against him, by endeavoring to lessen the oppression of the natives. The King ordered that all processes against him in the Court of Appeal and elsewhere, for damages done to individuals in regulating the *repartimientos*, should be discontinued, and the cases sent to himself for consideration. But with all these favors, as the Admiral claimed a share of the profits of the province of Castilla del Oro, saying that it was discovered by his father, as the names of its places such as Nombre de Dios, Porto Bello and El Retrete, plainly proved, the King ordered that interrogatories should be made among the mariners who had sailed with Christopher Columbus, in the hope of proving that he had not discovered the coast of Darien nor the gulf of Uraba. "Thus," adds Herrera, "Don Diego was always involved in litigations with the fiscal, so that he might truly say that he was heir to the troubles of his father."*

Not long after the departure of Don Diego from San Domingo, his uncle, Don Bartholomew, ended his active and laborious life. No particulars are given of his death, nor is there mention made of his age, which must have been advanced. King Ferdinand is said to have expressed great concern at the event, for he had an high opinion of the character and the talents of the Adelantado: "A man," says Herrera, "of not less

* Herrera, decad. ii., lib. ii., cap. 7.

worth than his brother the Admiral, and who, if he had been employed, would have given great proofs of it; for he was an excellent seaman, valiant and of great heart." * Charlevoix attributes the inaction in which Don Bartholomew had been suffered to remain for several years to the jealousy and parsimony of the King. He found the house already too powerful; and the Adelantado, had he discovered Mexico, was a man to make as good conditions as had been made by the Admiral his brother.† It was said, observed Herrera, that the King rather preferred to employ him in his European affairs, though it could only have been to divert him from other objects. On his death the King resumed to himself the island of Mona which had been given to him for life, and transferred his *repartimiento* of two hundred Indians to the vice-queen Dona Maria.

While the Admiral Don Diego was pressing for an audience in his vindication at court, King Ferdinand died, on the 23d of January, 1516. His grandson and successor, Prince Charles, afterwards the Emperor Charles V., was in Flanders. The government rested for a time with Cardinal Ximenes, who would not undertake to decide on the representations and claims of the Admiral. It was not until 1520 that he obtained from the Emperor Charles V. a recognition of his innocence of all the charges against him. The Emperor

* Herrera, decad. i., lib. x., cap. 16.
† Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Domingo*, lib. v.

finding that what Pasamonte and his party had written were notorious calumnies, ordered Don Diego to resume his charge, although the process with the fiscal was still pending, and that Pasamonte should be written to, requesting him to forgot all past passions and differences and to enter into amicable relations with Don Diego. Among other acts of indemnification he acknowledged his right to exercise his office of viceroy and governor in the island of Hispaniola, and in all parts discovered by his father.* His authority was, however, much diminished by new regulations, and a supervisor appointed over him with the right to give information to the Council against him, but with no other powers. Don Diego sailed in the beginning of September, 1520, and on his arrival at San Domingo, finding that several of the governors, presuming on his long absence, had arrogated to themselves independence, and had abused their powers, he immediately sent persons to supersede them, and demanded an account of their administration. This made him a host of active and powerful enemies, both in the colonies and in Spain.

Considerable changes had taken place in the island of Hispaniola, during the absence of the Admiral. The mines had fallen into neglect, the cultivation of the sugar-cane having been found a more certain source of wealth. It became a by-word in Spain that

* Herrera, decad. ii., lib. ix., cap. 7.

the magnificent palaces erected by Charles V. at Madrid and Toledo were built of the sugar of Hispaniola. Slaves had been imported in great numbers from Africa, being found more serviceable in the culture of the cane than the feeble Indians. The treatment of the poor negroes was cruel in the extreme; and they seem to have had no advocates even among the humane. The slavery of the Indians had been founded on the right of the strong; but it was thought that the negroes, from their color, were born to slavery; and that from being bought and sold in their own country, it was their natural condition. Though a patient and enduring race, the barbarities inflicted on them at length roused them to revenge, and on the 27th December, 1522, there was the first African revolt in Hispaniola. It began on a sugar plantation of the Admiral Don Diego, where about twenty slaves, joined by an equal number from a neighboring plantation, got possession of arms, rose on their superintendents, massacred them, and sallied forth upon the country. It was their intention to pillage certain plantations, to kill the whites, reinforce themselves by freeing their countrymen, and either to possess themselves of the town of Agua, or to escape to the mountains.

Don Diego set out from San Domingo in search of the rebels, followed by several of the principal inhabitants. On the second day he stopped on the banks of the river Nizao to rest his party and suffer reinforce-

ments to overtake him. Here one Melchor de Castro, who accompanied the Admiral, learnt that the negroes had ravaged his plantation, sacked his house, killed one of his men, and carried off his Indian slaves. Without asking leave of the Admiral, he departed in the night with two companions, visited his plantation, found all in confusion, and pursuing the negroes, sent to the Admiral for aid. Eight horsemen were hastily despatched to his assistance, armed with bucklers and lances, and having six of the infantry mounted behind them. De Castro had three horsemen besides this reinforcement, and at the head of this little band overtook the negroes at break of day. The insurgents put themselves in battle array, armed with stones and Indian spears, and uttering loud shouts and outcries. The Spanish horsemen braced their bucklers, couched their lances, and charged them at full speed. The negroes were soon routed, and fled to the rocks, leaving six dead and several wounded. De Castro also was wounded in the arm. The Admiral coming up, assisted in the pursuit of the fugitives. As fast as they were taken they were hanged on the nearest trees, and remained suspended as spectacles of terror to their countrymen. This prompt severity checked all further attempts at revolt among the African slaves.*

In the meantime the various enemies whom Don Diego had created both in the colonies and in Spain,

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. iii., lib. iv., cap. 9.

were actively and successfully employed. His old antagonist, the Treasurer Pasamonte, had charged him with usurping almost all the powers of the royal audience, and with having given to the royal declaration, re-establishing him in his office of viceroy, an extent never intended by the sovereign. These representations had weight at the court, and in 1523 Don Diego received a most severe letter from the Council of the Indies, charging him with the various abuses and excesses alleged against him, and commanding him, on pain of forfeiting all his privileges and titles, to revoke the innovations he had made, and restore things to their former state. To prevent any plea of ignorance of this mandate, the royal audience was enjoined to promulgate it and to call upon all persons to conform to it, and to see that it was properly obeyed. The Admiral received also a letter from the council, informing him that his presence was necessary in Spain, to give information of the foregoing matters, and advice relative to the reformation of various abuses, and to the treatment and preservation of Indians; he was requested, therefore, to repair to court without waiting for further orders.*

Don Diego understood this to be a peremptory recall, and obeyed accordingly. On his arrival in Spain, he immediately presented himself before the court at Victoria, with the frank and fearless spirit of an up-

* Herrera *Hist. Ind.*, decad. iii., lib. v., cap. 4.

right man, and pleaded his cause so well, that the sovereign and Council acknowledged his innocence on all points of accusation. He convinced them, moreover, of the exactitude with which he had discharged his duties; of his zeal for the public good, and the glory of the Crown; and that all the representations against him rose from the jealousy and enmity of Pasamonte and other royal officers in the colonies, who were impatient of any superior authority in the island to restrain them.

Having completely established his innocence, and exposed the calumnies of his enemies, Don Diego trusted that he would soon obtain justice as to all his claims. As these, however, involved a participation in the profits of vast and richly productive provinces, he experienced the delays and difficulties usual with such demands, for it is only when justice costs nothing that it is readily rendered. His earnest solicitations at length obtained an order from the Emperor, that a commission should be formed, composed of the grand chancellor, the Friar Loyasa, confessor to the Emperor, and President of the Royal Council of the Indies, and a number of other distinguished personages. They were to inquire into the various points in dispute between the Admiral and the fiscal, and into the proceedings which had taken place in the Council of the Indies, with the power of determining what justice required in the case.

The affair, however, was protracted to such a length, and accompanied by so many toils, vexations, and disappointments, that the unfortunate Diego, like his father, died in the pursuit. For two years he had followed the court from city to city, during its migrations from Victoria to Burgos, Valladolid, Madrid, and Toledo. In the winter of 1455, the Emperor set out from Toledo for Seville. The Admiral undertook to follow him, though his constitution was broken by fatigue and vexation, and he was wasting under the attack of a slow fever. Oviedo, the historian, saw him at Toledo two days before his departure, and joined with his friends in endeavoring to dissuade him from a journey in such a state of health, and at such a season. Their persuasions were in vain. Don Diego was not aware of the extent of his malady; he told them that he should repair to Seville by the Church of our Lady of Guadaloupe, to offer up his devotions at that shrine; and he trusted, through the intercession of the Mother of God, soon to be restored to health.* He accordingly left Toledo in a litter on the 21st of February, 1526, having previously confessed and taken the communion, and arrived the same day at Montalvan, distant about six leagues. There his illness increased to such a degree that he saw his end approaching. He employed the following day in arranging the affairs of his conscience, and expired on February 23d, being

* Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Domingo*, lib. vi.

little more than fifty years of age, his premature death having been hastened by the griefs and troubles he had experienced. "He was worn out," says Herrera, "by following up his claims, and defending himself from the calumnies of his competitors, who, with many stratagems and devices, sought to obscure the glory of the father and the virtue of the son." *

We have seen how the discovery of the New World rendered the residue of the life of Columbus a tissue of wrongs, hardships, and afflictions, and how the jealousy and enmity he had awakened were inherited by his son. It remains to show briefly in what degree the anticipations of perpetuity, wealth, and honor to his family were fulfilled.

When Don Diego Columbus died, his wife and family were at San Domingo. He left two sons, Luis and Christopher, and three daughters: Maria, who afterwards married Don Sancho de Cardono; Juana, who married Don Luis de Cueva; and Isabella, who married Don George of Portugal, Count of Gelves. He had also a natural son named Christopher.†

* Herrera, decad. iii., lib. viii., cap. 15.

† *Memorial Ajustado Sobre el Estado de Veragua.*

Charlevoix mentions another son called Diego, and calls one of the daughters Phillipine. Spotorno says that the daughter Maria took the veil; confounding her with a niece. These are trivial errors, merely noticed to avoid the imputation of inaccuracy. The account of the descendants of Columbus here given, accords with a genealogical tree of the family, produced before the Council of the Indies, in a great lawsuit for the estates.

After the death of Don Diego, his noble-spirited vice-queen, left with a number of young children, endeavored to assert and maintain the rights of the family. Understanding that, according to the privileges accorded to Christopher Columbus, they had a just claim to the viceroyalty of the province of Veragua, as having been discovered by him, she demanded a license from the royal audience of Hispaniola, to recruit men and fit out an *armada* to colonize that country. This the audience refused, and sent information of the demand to the Emperor. He replied, that the vice-queen should be kept in suspense until the justice of her claim could be ascertained; as, although he had at various times given commissions to different persons to examine the doubts and objections which had been opposed by the fiscal, no decision had ever been made.* The enterprise thus contemplated by the vice-queen was never carried into effect.

Shortly afterwards she sailed for Spain, to protect the claim of her eldest son, Don Luis, then six years of age. Charles V. was absent, but she was most graciously received by the Empress. The title of Admiral of the Indies was immediately conferred on her son, Don Luis, and the Emperor augmented his revenues, and conferred other favors on the family. Charles V. however could never be prevailed on to give Don Luis the title of viceroy, although that dignity had

* Herrera, decad. iv., lib. ii., cap. 6.

been decreed to his father, a few years previous to his death, as an hereditary right.*

In 1538, the young admiral, Don Luis, then about eighteen years of age, was at court, having instituted proceedings before the proper tribunals, for the recovery of the viceroyalty. Two years afterwards the suit was settled by arbitration, his uncle Don Fernando and Cardinal Loyasa, president of the Council of the Indies, being umpires. By a compromise Don Luis was declared Captain-General of Hispaniola, but with such limitations that it was little better than a bare title. Don Luis sailed for Hispaniola, but did not remain there long. He found his dignities and privileges mere sources of vexation, and finally entered into a compromise, which relieved himself and gratified the Emperor. He gave up all pretensions to the vice-royalty of the New World, receiving in its stead the titles of Duke of Veragua and Marquis of Jamaica.† He commuted also the claim of the tenth of the produce of the Indies for a pension of one thousand doubloons of gold.‡

Don Luis did not long enjoy the substitution of a certain, though moderate, revenue for a magnificent but unproductive claim. He died shortly afterwards, leaving no other male issue than an illegitimate son,

* Charlevoix. *Hist. St. Domingo*, lib. vi., p. 443.
† *Idem*, tom. i., lib. vi., p. 446.
‡ Spotorno, *Hist. Colom.*, p. 123.

named Christopher. He left two daughters by his wife, Doña Maria de Mosquera, one named Phillippa, and the other Maria, which last became a nun in the convent of St. Quirce, at Valladolid.

Don Luis having no legitimate son, was succeeded by his nephew Diego, son to his brother Christopher. A litigation took place between this young heir and his cousin Phillippa, daughter of the late Don Luis. The convent of St. Quirce also put in a claim, on behalf of its inmate, Doña Maria, who had taken the veil. Christopher, natural son to Don Luis, likewise became a prosecutor in the suit, but was set aside on account of his illegitimacy. Don Diego and his cousin Phillippa soon thought it better to join claims and persons in wedlock, than to pursue a tedious contest. They were married, and their union was happy, though not fruitful. Diego died without issue in 1578, and with him the legitimate line of Columbus became extinct.

One of the most important lawsuits that the world has ever witnessed now arose for the estates and dignities descended from the great discoverer. Don Diego had two sisters, Francisca and Maria, the former of whom, and the children of the latter, advanced their several claims. To these parties was added Bernard Colombo of Cogoleto, who claimed as lineal descendant from Bartholomew Columbus, the Adelantado, brother to the discoverer. He was, however, pro-

nounced ineligible, as the Adelantado had no acknowledged, and certainly no legitimate offspring.

Baldassar, or Balthazar Colombo, of the house of Cuccaro and Conzano, in the dukedom of Montferrat, in Piedmont, was an active and persevering claimant. He came from Italy into Spain, where he devoted himself for many years to the prosecution of this suit. He produced a genealogical tree of his family, in which was contained one Domenico Colombo, Lord of Cuccaro, whom he maintained to be the identical father of Christopher Columbus, the Admiral. He proved that this Domenico was living at the requisite era, and produced many witnesses who had heard that the navigator was born in the castle of Cuccaro; whence, it was added, he and his two brothers had eloped at an early age, and had never returned.* A monk is also mentioned among the witnesses, who made oath that Christopher and his brothers were born in that castle of Cuccaro. This testimony was afterwards withdrawn by the prosecutor; as it was found that the monk's recollection must have extended back considerably upward of a century.† The claim of Balthazar was negatived. His proofs that Christopher Columbus was a native of Cuccaro were rejected, as only heresay, or traditionary evidence. His ancestor Domenico, it appeared from his own showing, died in 1456; whereas

* Bossi, *Hist. Colomb. Dissert.*, p. 67.
† *Idem, Dissertation on the Country of Columbus*, p. 63.

it was established that Domenico, the father of the Admiral, was living upwards of thirty years after that date.

The cause was finally decided by the Council of the Indies, on the 2d December, 1608. The male line was declared to be extinct. Don Nuño or Nugno Gelves de Portugallo was put in possession, and became Duke of Veragua. He was grandson to Isabella, third daughter of Don Diego (son of the discoverer) by his vice-queen, Doña Maria de Toledo. The descendants of the two elder sisters of Isabella had a prior claim, but their lines became extinct previous to this decision of the suit. The Isabella just named, had married Don George of Portugal, Count of Gelves. "Thus," says Charlevoix, "the dignities and wealth of Columbus passed into a branch of the Portuguese house of Braganza, established in Spain, of which the heirs are entitled *De Portugallo, Colon, Duke de Veragua, Marques de la Jamaica, y Almirante de las Indies.*" *

The suit of Balthazar Colombo of Cuccaro was rejected under three different forms, by the Council of the Indies; and his application for an allowance of support under the legacy of Columbus, in favor of poor relations, was also refused; although the other parties had assented to the demand.† He died in Spain, where he had resided many years in prosecu-

* Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Domingo,* tom. i., lib. vi., p. 447.
† Bossi, *Dissertation on the Country of Columbus.*

tion of this suit. His son returned to Italy persisting in the validity of his claim; he said that it was in vain to seek justice in Spain; they were too much interested to keep those dignities and estates among themselves; but he gave out that he had received twelve thousand doubloons of gold in compromise from the other parties. Spotorno, under sanction of Ignazio de Giovanni, a learned canon, treats this assertion as a bravado, to cover his defeat, being contradicted by his evident poverty.* The family of Cuccaro however still maintain their right, and express great veneration for the memory of their illustrious ancestor, the Admiral; and travellers occasionally visit their old castle in Piedmont with great reverence, as the birthplace of the discoverer of the New World.

No. III.

FERNANDO COLUMBUS.

FERNANDO COLUMBUS (or Colon, as he is called in Spain), the natural son and historian of the Admiral, was born in Cordova. There is an uncertainty about the exact time of his birth. According to his epitaph, it must have been on the 28th September, 1488; but according to his original papers preserved in the

* Spotorno, p. 127.

library of the cathedral of Seville, and which were examined by Don Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga, historian of that city, it would appear to have been on the 29th of August, 1487. His mother, Doña Beatrix Enriquez, was of a respectable family, but was never married to the Admiral, as has been stated by some of his biographers.

Early in 1494, Fernando was carried to court, together with his elder brother Diego, by his uncle Don Bartholomew, to enter the royal household in quality of page to the prince Don Juan, son and heir to Ferdinand and Isabella. He and his brother remained in this situation until the death of the Prince; when they were taken by Queen Isabella as pages into her own service. Their education, of course, was well attended to, and Fernando in after-life gave proofs of being a learned man.

In the year 1502, at the tender age of thirteen or fourteen years, Fernando accompanied his father in his fourth voyage of discovery, and encountered all its singular and varied hardships with a fortitude that is mentioned with praise and admiration by the Admiral.

After the death of his father, it would appear that Fernando made two voyages to the New World. He accompanied the Emperor Charles V. also, to Italy, Flanders, and Germany; and according to Zuñiga (*Anales de Seville de 1539*, No. 3) travelled all over

Europe and a part of Africa and Asia. Possessing talents, judgment, and industry, these opportunities were not lost upon him, and he acquired much information in geography, navigation, and natural history. Being of a studious habit, and fond of books, he formed a select, yet copious library, of more than twenty thousand volumes, in print and in manuscript. With the sanction of the Emperor Charles V., he undertook to establish an academy and college of mathematics at Seville ; and for this purpose commenced the construction of a sumptuous edifice, without the walls of the city, facing the Guadalquivir, in the place where the monastery of San Laureano is now situated. His constitution however had been broken by the sufferings he had experienced in his travels and voyages, and a premature death prevented the completion of his plan of the academy, and broke off other useful labors. He died in Seville on the 12th of July, 1539, at the age, according to his epitaph, of fifty years, nine months, and fourteen days. He left no issue, and was never married. His body was interred according to his request, in the cathedral of Seville. He bequeathed his valuable library to the same establishment.

Don Fernando devoted himself much to letters. According to the inscription on his tomb, he composed a work in four books, or volumes, the title of which is defaced on the monument, and the work

itself is lost. This is much to be regretted, as, according to Zuñiga, the fragments of the inscription specify it to have contained, among a variety of matter, historical, moral, and geographical, notices of the countries he had visited, but especially of the New World, and of the voyages and discoveries of his father.

His most important and permanent work, however, was a history of the Admiral, composed in Spanish. It was translated into Italian by Alonzo de Ulloa, and from this Italian translation have proceeded the editions which have since appeared in various languages. It is singular that the work only exists in Spanish in the form of a re-translation from that of Ulloa, and full of errors in the orthography of proper names, and in dates and distances.

Don Fernando was an eye-witness of some of the facts which he relates, particularly of the fourth voyage wherein he accompanied his father. He had also the papers and charts of his father, and recent documents of all kinds to extract from, as well as familiar acquaintance with the principal personages who were concerned in the events which he records. He was a man of probity and discernment, and writes more dispassionately than could be expected, when treating of matters which affected the honor, the interests, and happiness of his father. It is to be regretted, however, that he should have suffered the whole of his father's life, previous to his discoveries (a period of

about fifty-six years), to remain in obscurity. He appears to have wished to cast a cloud over it, and only to have presented his father to the reader after he had rendered himself illustrious by his actions, and his history had become in a manner identified with the history of the world. His work, however, is an invaluable document, entitled to great faith, and is the corner-stone of the history of the American Continent.

No. IV.

AGE OF COLUMBUS.

As the date I have assigned for the birth of Columbus makes him about ten years older than he is generally represented at the time of his discoveries, it is proper to state precisely my authority. In the valuable manuscript chronicle of the reign of the Catholic sovereigns, written by Andres Bernaldes, the Curate of Los Palacios, there is a long tract on the subject of the discoveries of Columbus; it concludes with these words: "*Muria en Valladolid, el año de 1506, en el mes de Mayo, in senectute bona, de edad 70 años, poco mas 6 menos.*" (He died in Valladolid in the year 1506, in the month of May in a good old age, being seventy years old, a little more or less). The Curate of Los Palacios was a contemporary, and an

intimate friend of Columbus, who was occasionally a guest in his house; no one was more competent, therefore, to form a correct idea of his age. It is singular, that, while the biographers of Columbus have been seeking to establish the epoch of his birth by various calculations and conjectures, this direct testimony of honest Andres Bernaldes has entirely escaped their notice, though some of them had his manuscript in their hands. It was first observed by my accurate friend Don Antonio Uguina in the course of his exact investigations, and has been pointed out and ably supported by Don Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, in the introduction to his valuable collection of voyages.

Various circumstances in the life of Columbus will be found to corroborate the statement of the Curate; such, for example, as the increasing infirmities with which he struggled during his voyages, and which at last rendered him a cripple and confined him to his bed. The allusion to his advanced age in one of his letters to the sovereigns, wherein he relates the consolation he had received from a secret voice in the night season: "*Tu vejez no impedira a toda cosa grande. Abrahan pasaba cien años cuando engendro a Isaac*, etc." (Thy old age shall be no impediment to any great undertaking. Abraham was above a hundred years old, when he begat Isaac, etc.) The permission granted him by the King the year previous to his death to travel on a mule, instead of a horse, on

account of his *age* and infirmities; and the assertion of Oviedo, that at the time of his death he was quite old (*era ya viejo*).

This fact of the advanced age of Columbus throws quite a new coloring over his character and history. How much more extraordinary is the ardent enthusiasm which sustained him through his long career of solicitation, and the noble pride with which he refused to descend from his dignified demands, and to bargain about his proposition, though life was rapidly wasting in delays. How much more extraordinary is the hardihood with which he undertook repeated voyages into unknown seas, amidst all kinds of perils and hardships; the fortitude with which he bore up against an accumulation of mental and bodily afflictions, enough to have disheartened and destroyed the most youthful and robust, and the irrepressible buoyancy of spirit with which to the last he still rose from under the ruined concerns and disappointed hopes and blasted projects of one enterprise, to launch into another, still more difficult and perilous.

We have been accustomed to admire all these things in Columbus when we considered him in the full vigor of his life; how much more are they entitled to our wonder as the achievements of a man whom the weight of years and infirmities was pressing into the grave.

No. V.

LINEAGE OF COLUMBUS.

THE ancestry of Christopher Columbus has formed a point of zealous controversy, which is not yet satisfactorily settled. Several honorable families, possessing domains in Placentia, Montferrat, and the different parts of the Genoese territories, claim him as belonging to their houses; and to these has recently been added the noble family of Colombo in Modena.* The natural desire to prove consanguinity with a man of distinguished renown has excited this rivalry; but it has been heightened, in particular instances, by the hope of succeeding to titles and situations of wealth and honor, when his male line of descendants became extinct. The investigation is involved in particular obscurity, as even his immediate relatives appear to have been in ignorance on the subject.

Fernando Columbus in his biography of the Admiral, after a pompous prelude, in which he attempts to throw a vague and cloudy magnificence about the origin of his father, notices slightly the attempts of some to obscure his fame, by making him a native of various small and insignificant villages; and dwells with more complacency upon others who make him a native of places in which there were persons of much honor of the name, and many sepulchral monuments

* Spotorno, *Hist. Mem.*, p. 5.

with arms and epitaphs of the Colombos. He relates his having himself gone to the castle of Cucureo, to visit two brothers of the family of Colombo, who were rich and noble, the youngest of whom was above one hundred years of age, and who he had heard were relatives of his father; but they could give him no information upon the subject; whereupon he breaks forth into his professed contempt for these adventitious claims, declaring that he thinks it better to content himself with dating from the glory of the Admiral, than to go about inquiring whether his father "were a merchant, or one who kept his hawks*"; since, adds he, of persons of similar pursuits, there are thousands who die every day, whose memory, even among their own neighbors and relatives, perishes immediately, without its being possible afterwards to ascertain even whether they existed.

After this, and a few more expressions of similar disdain for these empty distinctions, he indulges in vehement abuse of Agostino Giustiniani, whom he calls a false historian, an inconsiderate, partial, or malignant compatriot, for having in his psalter traduced his father, by saying that in his youth he had been employed in mechanical occupations.

As after all this discussion Fernando leaves the ques-

* Literally, in the original, *Cazador de Volateria*, a Falconer. Hawking was in those days an amusement of the highest classes; and to keep hawks was almost a sign of nobility.

tion of his father's parentage in all its original obscurity, yet appears irritably sensitive to any derogatory suggestions of others, his whole evidence tends to the conviction that he really knew nothing to boast of in his ancestry.

Of the nobility and antiquity of the Colombo family of which the Admiral probably was a remote descendant, we have some account in Herrera. "We learn, he says, "that the Emperor Otto the Second, in 940, confirmed to the counts Pietro, Giovanni, and Alexandro Colombo, brothers, the feudatory possessions which they held within the jurisdiction of the cities of Ayqui, Savona, Aste, Montferrat, Turin, Viceli, Parma, Cremona, and Bergamo, and all others which they held in Italy. It appears that the Colombos of Cuccaro, Cucureo, and Placentia were the same, and that the Emperor in the same year, 940, made donation to the said three brothers of the castles of Cuccaro, Conzano, Rosignano, and others, and of the fourth part of Bistanio, which appertained to the empire.*

One of the boldest attempts of these biographers bent on ennobling Columbus, has been to make him son of the Lord of Cuccaro, a burgh of Montferrat, in Piedmont, and to prove that he was born in his father's castle at that place; whence he and his brothers eloped at an early age and never returned.

* Herrera, decad. i., lib. i., cap. 7.

This was asserted in course of a process brought by a certain Baldasser or Balthazar Colombo, resident of Genoa, but originally of Cuccaro, claiming the title and estates on the death of Diego Colon, Duke of Veragua, in 1578, the great-grandson and last legitimate male descendant of the Admiral. The Council of the Indies decided against this claim to relationship. Some account of the lawsuit will be found in another part of the work.

This romantic story, like all others of the nobility of his parentage, is at utter variance with the subsequent events of his life, his long struggles with indigence and obscurity, and the difficulties he endured from the want of family connections. How can it be believed, says Bossi, that this same man, who in his most cruel adversities was incessantly taunted by his enemies with the obscurity of his birth, should not reply to this reproach by declaring his origin, if he were really descended from the lords of Cuccaro, Conzano, and Rosignano? a circumstance which would have obtained him the highest credit with the Spanish nobility.*

The different families of Colombo which lay claim to the great navigator seem to be various branches of one tree, and there is little doubt of his appertaining remotely to the same respectable stock.

It appears evident however that Columbus sprang

* *Dissertation*, etc.

immediately from a line of humble but industrious citizens, which had existed in Genoa even from the time of Giacomo Colombo the wool-carder, in 1311, mentioned by Spotorno; nor is this in any wise incompatible with the intimation of Fernando Columbus, that the family had been reduced from high estate to great poverty by the wars of Lombardy. The feuds of Italy in those ages had broken down and scattered many of the noblest families; and while some branches remained in the lordly heritage of castles and domains, others were confounded with the humblest population of the cities.

No. VI.

BIRTHPLACE OF COLUMBUS.

THERE has been much controversy about the birthplace of Columbus. The greatness of his renown has induced various places to lay claim to him as a native, and from motives of laudable pride, for nothing reflects greater lustre upon a city than to have given birth to distinguished men. The original and long-established opinion was in favor of Genoa; but such strenuous claims were asserted by the states of Placentia and in particular of Piedmont, that the Academy of Sciences and Letters of Genoa was induced, in 1812, to nominate three of its members, Signor Serra, Car-

rega, and Piaggio, commissioners to examine into these pretensions.

The claims of Placentia had been first advanced in 1662, by Pietro Maria Campi, in the ecclesiastical history of that place, who maintains that Columbus was a native of the village of Pradello, in that vicinity. It appeared probable, on investigation, that Bertolino Colombo, great-grandfather to the Admiral, had owned a small property in Pradello, the rent of which had been received by Domenico Colombo of Genoa, and after his death by his sons Christopher and Bartholomew. Admitting this assertion to be correct, there was no proof that either the Admiral, his father, or grandfather had ever resided on that estate. The very circumstances of the case indicated, on the contrary, that their home was in Genoa.

The claim of Piedmont was maintained with more plausibility. It was shown that a Domenico Colombo was lord of the castle of Cuccaro in Montferrat at the time of the birth of Christopher Columbus, who, it was asserted, was his son, and born in his castle. Balthazar Colombo, a descendant of this person, instituted a lawsuit before the Council of the Indies for the inheritance of the Admiral, when his male line became extinct. The Council of the Indies decided against him, as is shown in an account of that process given among the appendices of this history. It was proved that Domenico Colombo, father of the Admiral, was

resident in Genoa both before and many years after the death of this Lord of Cuccaro who bore the same name.

The three commissioners appointed by the Academy of Science and Letters of Genoa to examine into these pretensions, after a long and diligent investigation, gave a voluminous and circumstantial report in favor of Genoa. An ample digest of their inquest may be found in the *History of Columbus* by Signor Bossi, who, in an able dissertation on the question, confirms their opinion. It may be added in further corroboration that Peter Martyr and Bartholomew Las Casas, who were contemporaries and acquaintances of Columbus, and Juan de Barros, the Portuguese historian, all make Columbus a native of the Genoese territories.

There has been a question fruitful of discussion among the Genoese themselves whether Columbus was born in the city of Genoa or in some other part of the territory. Finale, and Oneglia, and Savona, towns on the Ligurian coast to the west, Boggiasco, Cogoleto, several other towns and villages claim him as their own. His family possessed a small property at a village or hamlet between Quinto and Nervi, called Terra Rossa; in Latin, Terra Rubra; which has induced some writers to assign his birth to one of those places. Bossi says that there is still a tower between Quinto and Nervi which bears the title of Torre dei Colombi.* Bartholomew Columbus, brother to the

* Bossi. French translation, Paris, 1824, p. 69.

Admiral, styled himself of Terra Rubra in a Latin inscription on a map which he presented to Henry VII. of England, and Fernando Columbus states, in his history of the Admiral, that he was accustomed to subscribe himself in the same manner before he attained to his dignities.

Cogoleto at one time bore away the palm. The families there claimed the discoverer and preserved a portrait of him. One or both of the two Admirals named Colombo, with whom he sailed, are stated to have come from that place, and to have been confounded with him so as to have given support to this idea.*

Savona, a city in the Genoese territories, has claimed the same honor, and this claim has recently been very strongly brought forward. Signor Giovanni Battista Belloro, an advocate of Savona, has strenuously maintained this claim in an ingenious disputation, dated May 12, 1826, in form of a letter to the Baron du Zach, editor of a valuable astronomical and geographical journal published monthly at Genoa.†

Signor Belloro claims it as an admitted fact, that Domenico Colombo was for many years a resident and citizen of Savona, in which place one Christopher Columbus is shown to have signed a document in 1472.

He states that a public square in that city bore the

* *Idem.*

† *Correspondence Astronom., Geograph., etc., de Baron du Zach,* vol. 14, cahier. 6, lettera 29. 1826.

name of Platea Columbi toward the end of the fourteenth century; that the Ligurian government gave the name of Jurisdizione di Colombi to that district of the republic under the persuasion that the great navigator was a native of Savona; and that Columbus gave the name of Saona to a little island adjacent to Hispaniola among his earliest discoveries.

He quotes many Savonese writers, principally poets, and various historians and poets of other countries, and thus establishes the point that Columbus was held to be a native of Savona by persons of respectable authority. He lays particular stress on the testimony of the Magnifico Francisco Spinola, as related by the learned prelate Felippo Alberto Pollero, stating that he had seen the sepulchre of Christopher Columbus in the cathedral at Seville, and that the epitaph states him expressly to be a native of Savona—"*Hic jacet Christophorus Columbus Savonensis.*"*

The proofs advanced by Signor Belloro show his zeal for the honor of his native city, but do not authenticate the fact he undertakes to establish. He shows clearly that many respectable writers believed Columbus to be a native of Savona; but a far greater number can be adduced, and many of them contemporary with the Admiral, some of them his intimate

* Felippo Alberto Pollero, Epicherema, cioé breve discorso per difesa di sua persona e carrattere. Torino, per Gio Battista Zappata. MCDXCVI. (read 1696) in 4o., page 47.

friends, others his fellow-citizens, who state him to have been born in the city of Genoa. Among the Savonese writers, Giulio Salinorio, who investigated the subject, comes expressly to the same conclusion: "*Genova, città nobilissima, era la patria de Colombo.*"

Signor Belloro appears to be correct in stating that Domenico, the father of the Admiral, was several years resident in Savona. But it appears from his own dissertation, that the Christopher who witnessed the testament in 1472, styled himself of Genoa: "*Christophus Columbus lanerius de Janua.*" This incident is stated by other writers, who presume this Christopher to have been the navigator on a visit to his father, in the interval of his early voyages. In as far as the circumstance bears on the point, it supports the idea that he was born at Genoa.

The epitaph on which Signor Belloro places his principal reliance, entirely fails. Christopher Columbus was not interred in the cathedral of Seville, nor was any monument erected to him in that edifice. The tomb to which the learned prelate, Felippo Alberto Pollero, alludes, may have been that of Fernando Columbus, son of the Admiral, who, as has been already observed, was buried in the cathedral of Seville, to which he bequeathed his noble library. The place of his sepulture is designated by a broad slab of white marble, inserted in the pavement, with an inscription, partly in Spanish, partly in Latin,

recording the merits of Fernando, and the achievements of his father. On either side of the epitaph is engraved an ancient Spanish galley. The inscription quoted by Signor Belloro may have been erroneously written from memory by the Magnifico Francisco Spinola, under the mistaken idea that he had beheld the sepulchre of the great discoverer. As Fernando was born at Cordova, the term *Savonensis* must have been another error of memory in the Magnifico; no such word is to be found in the inscription.

This question of birthplace has also been investigated with considerable minuteness, and a decision given in favor of Genoa, by D. Gio Battista Spotorno, of the royal university in that city, in his historical memoir of Columbus. He shows that the family of Columbi had long been resident in Genoa. By an extract from the notarial register, it appeared that one Giacomo Colombo, a wool-carder, resided without the gate of St. Andria, in the year 1311. An agreement, also, published by the academy of Genoa, proved, that in 1489, Domenico Colombo possessed a house and shop, and a garden with a well, in the street of St. Andrew's gate, anciently without the walls, presumed to have been the same residence with that of Giacomo Colombo. He rented also another house from the monks of St. Stephen, in the Via Mulcento, leading from the street of St. Andrew to the Strada Giulia.*

* Spotorno. English translation, pp. xi., xii.

Signor Bossi states, that documents lately found in the archives of the monastery of St. Stephen, present the name of Domenico Colombo several times, from 1456 to 1459, and designate him as son of Giovanni Colombo, husband of Susanna Fontanarossa, and father of Christopher, Bartholomew, and Giacomo * (or Diego). He states also that the receipts of the canons show that the last payment of rent was made by Domenico Colombo for his dwelling in 1489. He surmises that the Admiral was born in the before-mentioned house belonging to those monks, in Via Mulcento, and that he was baptized in the church of St. Stephen. He adds that an ancient manuscript was submitted to the commissioners of the Genoese academy, in the margin of which the notary had stated that the name of Christopher was on the register of the parish as having been baptized in that church. †

Andrez Bernaldez, the Curate of los Palacios, who was an intimate friend of Columbus, says that he was of Genoa. ‡ Agostino Giustiniani, a contemporary of Columbus, likewise asserts it in his *Polyglot Psalter*, published in Genoa in 1516. Antonio de Herrera, an author of great accuracy, who, though not a contemporary, had access to the best documents, asserts decidedly that he was born in the city of Genoa.

* Bossi. French translation, p. 76.
† *Idem*, p. 88.
‡ Cura de los Palacios, MS., cap. 118.

To these names may be added that of Alexander Geraldini, brother to the *nuncio*, and instructor to the children of Ferdinand and Isabella, a most intimate friend of Columbus.* Also Antonio Gallo,† Bartolomew Senarega,‡ and Uberto Foglieta,§ all contemporaries with the Admiral, and natives of Genoa, together with an anonymous writer, who published an account of his voyage of discovery at Venice in 1509.¶ It is unnecessary to mention historians of later date agreeing in the same fact, as they must have derived their information from some of these authorities.

The question in regard to the birthplace of Columbus has been treated thus minutely, because it has been, and still continues to be, a point of warm controversy. It may be considered, however, as conclusively decided by the highest authority, the evidence of Columbus himself. In a testament executed in 1498, which has been admitted in evidence before the Spanish tribunals in certain lawsuits among his descendants, he twice declares that he was a native of the city of Genoa: "*Siendo yo nacido en Genova.*" "I being born in Genoa." And again he repeats the assertion, as a reason for enjoining certain conditions

* Alex. Geraldini, *Itin. ad Reg. sub. Aquinor.*
† Antonio Gallo, *Annales of Genoa*, *Muratori*, tom. 23.
‡ Senarega, *Muratori*, tom. 24.
§ Foglieta, *Elog. Clar. Ligur.*
¶ Grinæus, *Nov. Orb.*

on his heirs, which manifest the interest he takes in his native place. "I command the said Diego, my son, or the person who inherits the said *mayorazgo*, (or entailed estate) that he maintain always in the city of Genoa a person of our lineage, who shall have a house and a wife there, and to furnish him with an income on which he can live decently, as a person connected with our family, and hold footing and root in that city as a native of it, so that he may have aid and favor in that city in case of need, *for from thence I came and there was born.*" *

In another part of his testament he expresses himself with a filial fondness in respect to Genoa. "I command the said Don Diego, or whoever shall possess the said *mayorazgo*, that he labor and strive always for the honor, and welfare, and increase of the city of Genoa, and employ all his abilities and means in defending and augmenting the welfare and honor of her republic, in all matters which are not contrary to the service of the Church of God, and the state of the King and Queen our sovereigns, and their successors."

* "Item. Mando el dicho Don Diego mi hijo, á la persona que heredare e dicho mayorazgo, que tenga y sostenga siempre en la ciudad de Genova una persona de nuestro linage que tenga alli casa é muger, é le ordene renta con que pueda vivir honestamente, como persona tan llegada á nuestro linage, y haga pie y raiz en la dicha ciudad como natural della, porque podrá haber de la dicha ciudad ayuda e favor en las cosas del menester suyo, *pues que della sali y en ella naci.*"

An informal codicil, executed by Columbus at Valladolid, May 4, 1506, sixteen days before his death, was discovered about 1785, in the Corsini library at Rome. It is termed a military codicil, from being made in a manner which the civil law allows to the soldier who executes such an instrument on the eve of battle, or in expectation of death. It was written on the blank page of a little breviary presented to Columbus by Pope Alexander VII. Columbus leaves the book "to his beloved country, the Republic of Genoa."

He directs the erection of a hospital in that city for the poor, with provision for its support; and he declares that republic his successor in the Admiralty of the Indies, in the event of his male line becoming extinct.

The authenticity of this paper has been questioned. It has been said, that there was no probability of Columbus having resort to a usage with which he was, most likely, unacquainted. The objections are not cogent. Columbus was accustomed to the peculiarities of a military life, and he repeatedly wrote letters, in critical moments, as a precaution against some fatal occurrence that seemed to impend. The present codicil, from its date, must have been written a few days previous to his death, perhaps at a moment when he imagined himself at extremity. This may account for any difference in the handwriting, especially as he

was, at times, so affected by the gout in his hands as to be unable to write except at night. Particular stress has been laid on the signature; but it does not appear that he was uniform in regard to that, and it is a point to which any one who attempted a forgery would be attentive. It does not appear, likewise, that any advantage could have been obtained by forging the paper, or that any such was attempted.

In 1502, when Columbus was about to depart on his fourth and last voyage, he wrote to his friend, Doctor Nicolo Oderigo, formerly ambassador from Genoa to Spain, and forwarded to him copies of all his grants and commissions from the Spanish sovereigns, authenticated before the alcaldes of Seville. He, at the same time, wrote to the bank of San Giorgio, at Genoa, assigning a tenth of his revenues to be paid to that city in diminution of the duties on corn, neiw, and other provisions.

Why should Columbus feel this strong interest in Genoa, had he been born in any of the other Italian states which have laid claim to him? He was under no obligation to Genoa. He had resided there but a brief portion of his early life; and his proposition for discovery, according to some writers, had been scornfully rejected by that republic. There is nothing to warrant so strong an interest in Genoa, but the filial tie which links the heart of a man to his native place, however he may be separated from it by time or dis-

tance, and however little he may be indebted to it for favors.

Again, had Columbus been born in any of the towns and villages of the Genoese coast which have claimed him for a native, why should he have made these bequests in favor of the *city* of Genoa, and not of his native town or village.

These bequests were evidently dictated by a mingled sentiment of pride and affection, which would be without all object if not directed to his native place. He was at this time elevated above all petty pride on the subject. His renown was so brilliant, that it would have shed a lustre on any hamlet, however obscure; and the strong love of country here manifested, would never have felt satisfied, until he had signalled out the spot, and nestled down in the very cradle of his infancy. These appear to be powerful reasons, drawn from natural feeling, for deciding in favor of Genoa.

No. VII.

THE COLOMBOS.

During the early part of the life of Columbus, there were two other navigators, bearing the same name, of some rank and celebrity, with whom he occasionally sailed; their names occurring vaguely from time to time, during the obscure part of his career,

have caused much perplexity to some of his biographers, who have supposed that they designated the discoverer. Fernando Columbus affirms them to have been family connections,* and his father says, in one of his letters, "I am not the first admiral of our family."

These two were uncle and nephew: the latter being termed by historians Colombo the Younger (by the Spanish historians Colombo el Mozo). They were in the Genoese service, but are mentioned occasionally in old chronicles as French commanders, because Genoa, during a great part of their time, was under the protection, or rather the sovereignty, of France, and her ships and captains, being engaged in the expeditions of that power, were identified with the French marine.

Mention is made of the elder Colombo in Zurita's *Annals of Arragon*, (L. xix., p. 261) in the war between Spain and Portugal, on the subject of the claim of the Princess Juana to the Crown of Castile. In 1476, the King of Portugal determined to go to the Mediterranean coast of France, to incite his ally, Louis XI., to prosecute the war in the province of Guipuzcoa.

The King left Toro, says Zurita, on the 13th June, and went by the river to the city of Porto, in order to await the *armada* of the King of France, the captain

* *Hist. del Almirante*, cap. 1.

of which was Colon (Colombo), who was to navigate by the Straits of Gibraltar to pass to Marseilles.

After some delays Colombo arrived in the latter part of July with the French *armada* at Bermeo, on the coast of Biscay, where he encountered a violent storm, lost his principal ship, and ran to the coast of Galicia, with an intention of attacking Ribaldo, and lost a great many of his men. Thence he went to Lisbon to receive the King of Portugal, who embarked in the fleet in August, with a number of his noblemen, and took two thousand two hundred foot-soldiers and four hundred and seventy horse, to strengthen the Portuguese garrisons along the Barbary coast. There were in the squadron twelve ships and five caravels. After touching at Ceuta the fleet proceeded to Colibre, where the King disembarked in the middle of September, the weather not permitting them to proceed to Marseilles. (Zurita, L. xix., ch. 51.)

This Colombo is evidently the naval commander of whom the following mention is made by Jacques de Chaufepie, in his supplement to Bayle (vol. ii., p. 126 of letter C.).

"I do not know what dependence," says Chaufepie, "is to be placed on a fact reported in the *Ducatiana* (Part 1, p. 143,) that Columbus was in 1474 captain of several ships for Louis XI., and that as the Spaniards had made at that time an irruption into Roussillon he thought that, for reprisal, and without contravening

the peace between the two crowns, he could run down Spanish vessels. He attacked, therefore, and took two galleys of that nation, freighted on the account of various individuals. On complaints of this action being made to King Ferdinand, he wrote on the subject to Louis XI.; his letter is dated the 9th of December, 1474. Ferdinand terms Christopher Columbus a subject of Louis; it was because, as is known, Columbus was a Genoese, and Louis was sovereign of Genoa; although that city and Savona were held of him in fief by the Duke of Milan."

It is highly probable that it was the squadron of this same Colombo of whom the circumstance is related by Bossi, and after him by Spotorno on the authority of a letter found in the archives of Milan, and written in 1476 by two illustrious Milanese gentlemen, on their return from Jerusalem. The letter states that in the previous year, 1475, as the Venetian fleet was stationed off Cyprus to guard the island, a Genoese squadron, commanded by one Colombo, sailed by them with an air of defiance, shouting, "Viva San Giorgia!" As the republics were then at peace they were permitted to pass unmolested.

Bossi supposes that the Colombo here mentioned was Christopher Columbus the discoverer; but it appears rather to have been the old Genoese admiral of that name, who according to Zurita, was about that time cruising in the Mediterranean; and who, in all

probability, was the hero of both the preceding occurrences.

The nephew of this Colombo, called by the Spaniards Colombo el Mozo, commanded a few years afterwards a squadron in the French service, as will appear in a subsequent appendix, and Columbus may at various times have held an inferior command under both uncle and nephew, and been present on the above-cited occasions.

No. VIII.

EXPEDITION OF JOHN OF ANJOU.

About the time that Columbus attained his twenty-fourth year, his native city was in a state of great alarm and peril from the threatened invasion of Alphonso V. of Arragon, King of Naples. Finding itself too weak to contend singly with such a foe, and having in vain looked for assistance from Italy, it placed itself under the protection of Charles VII. of France. That monarch sent to its assistance John of Anjou, son of René or Renato, King of Naples, who had been dispossessed of his crown by Alphonso. John of Anjou, otherwise called the Duke of Calabria,* immediately took upon himself the command of the place, repaired his fortifications, and defended

* Duke of Calabria was a title of the heir-apparent to the crown of Naples.

the entrance of the harbor with strong chains. In the meantime Alphonso had prepared a large land force, and assembled an armament of twenty ships and ten galleys at Ancona, on the frontiers of Genoa. The situation of the latter was considered eminently perilous, when Alphonso suddenly fell ill of a calenture and died; leaving the kingdoms of Anjou and Sicily to his brother John, and the kingdom of Naples to his son Ferdinand.

The death of Alphonso, and the subsequent division of his dominions, while they relieved the fears of the Genoese, gave rise to new hopes on the part of the house of Anjou; and the Duke John, encouraged by emissaries from various powerful partisans among the Neapolitan nobility, determined to make a bold attempt upon Naples for the recovery of the Crown. The Genoese entered into his cause with spirit, furnishing him with ships, galleys, and money. His father, René or Renato, fitted out twelve galleys for the expedition, in the harbor of Marseilles, and sent him assurance of an abundant supply of money, and of the assistance of the King of France. The brilliant nature of the enterprise attracted the attention of the daring and restless spirits of the times. The chivalrous nobleman, the soldier of fortune, the hardy corsair, the bold adventurer or the military partisan, enlisted under the banners of the Duke of Calabria. It is stated by historians that Columbus served in the

armament from Genoa, in a squadron commanded by one of the Colombos, his relations.

The expedition sailed in October, 1459, and arrived at Sessa between the mouths of the Garigliano and the Volturno. The news of its arrival was the signal of universal revolt; the factious barons and their vassals hastened to join the standard of Anjou, and the Duke soon saw the finest provinces of the Neapolitan dominions at his command, and with his army and squadron menaced the city of Naples itself.

In the history of this expedition we meet with one hazardous action of the fleet in which Columbus had embarked.

The army of John of Anjou, being closely invested by a superior force, was in a perilous predicament at the mouth of the Sarno. In this conjuncture the captain of the *armada* landed with his men and scoured the neighborhood, hoping to awaken in the populace their former enthusiasm for the banner of Anjou, and perhaps to take Naples by surprise. A chosen company of Neapolitan infantry was sent against them. The troops from the fleet having little of the discipline of regular soldiery, and much of the freebooting disposition of maritime rovers, had scattered themselves about the country, intent chiefly upon spoil. They were attacked by the infantry and put to rout, with the loss of many killed and wounded. Endeavoring to make their way back to the ships, they found the

passes seized and blocked up by the people of Sorrento, who assailed them with dreadful havoc. Their flight now became desperate and headlong, many threw themselves from rocks and precipices into the sea, and but a small portion regained the ships.

The contest of John of Anjou for the crown of Naples lasted four years. For a time fortune favored him, and the prize seemed almost within his grasp, but reverses succeeded : he was defeated at various points ; the factious nobles, one by one, deserted him, and returned to their allegiance to Alphonso, and the Duke was finally compelled to retire to the island of Ischia. Here he remained for some time, guarded by eight galleys, which likewise harassed the Bay of Naples.* In this squadron, which loyally adhered to him until he ultimately abandoned this unfortunate enterprise, Columbus is stated to have served.

No. IX.

CAPTURE OF THE VENETIAN GALLEYS BY COLOMBO THE YOUNGER.

As the account of the sea-fight by which Fernando Columbus asserts that his father was first thrown upon the shores of Portugal has been adopted by various

* Colenuccis, *Hist. Nap.*, lib. vii., cap. 17.

respectable historians, it is proper to give particular reasons for discrediting it.

Fernando expressly says, that it was in an action mentioned by Marco Antonio Sabelico, in the eighth book of his tenth Decade; that the squadron in which Columbus served was commanded by a famous corsair, called Columbus the younger (Colombo el Mozo), and that an embassy was sent from Venice to thank the King of Portugal for the succor he afforded to the Venetian captains and crews. All this is certainly recorded in Sabellicus, but the battle took place in 1485, after Columbus had *left* Portugal. Zurita, in his *Annals of Arragon*, under the date of 1685, mentions this same action. He says: "At this time four Venetian galleys sailed from the island of Cadiz, and took the route for Flanders; they were laden with merchandise from the Levant, especially from the island of Sicily, and passing by Cape St. Vincent they were attacked by a French corsair, son of Captain Colon (Colombo), who had seven vessels in his *armada;* and the galleys were captured the twenty-first of August."*

A much fuller account is given in the life of King John II. of Portugal, by Garcia de Resende, who likewise records it as happening in 1485. He says the Venetian galleys were taken and robbed by the French, and the captains and crews, wounded, plun-

* Zurita, *Anales de Aragon*, lib. xx., cap. 64.

dered, and maltreated, were turned on shore at Cascoes. Here they were succored by Doña Maria de Meneses, Countess of Monsanto.

When King John II. heard of the circumstance, being much grieved that such an event should have happened on his coast, and being disposed to show his friendship for the republic of Venice, he ordered that the Venetian captains should be furnished with rich raiment of silks and costly cloths, and provided with horses and mules, that they might make their appearance before him in a style befitting themselves and their country. He received them with great kindness and distinction, expressing himself with princely courtesy, both as to themselves and the republic of Venice ; and having heard their account of the battle, and of their destitute situation, he assisted them with a large sum of money to ransom their galleys from the French cruisers. The latter took all the merchandise on board of their ships, but King John prohibited any of the spoil from being purchased within his dominions. Having thus generously relieved and assisted the captains, and administered to the necessities of their crews, he enabled them all to return in their own galleys to Venice.

The dignitaries of the republic were so highly sensible of this munificence on the part of King John, that they sent a stately embassy to that monarch, with rich presents and warm expressions of gratitude.

Geronimo Donate was charged with the mission, a man eminent for learning and eloquence; he was honorably received and entertained by King John, and dismissed with royal presents, among which were jenets, and mules with sumptuous trappings and caparisons, and many negro slaves richly clad.*

The following is the account of this action given by Sabellicus, in his *History of Venice* † :

" Erano andate quattro Galee delle quali Bartolommeo Minio era capitano. Queste navigando per l' Iberico mare, Colombo il più giovane, nipote di quel Colombo famoso corsale, fecesi incontro a' Veniziani di notte, appresso il sacro Promontorio, che chiamasi ora capo di san Vincenzo, con sette navi guernite da combattere. Egli quantunque nel primo incontro avesse seco disposto d'opprimere le navi Veniziane, si ritenne però dal combattere sin al giorno : tuttavia per esser alla battaglia più acconcio così le seguia, che le prode del corsale toccavano le poppe de Veniziani. Venuto il giorno incontanente i Barbari diedero 'l

* *Obras de Garcia de Resende*, cap. 58, Avora, 1554.

† Marco Antonio Coccio, better known under the name of Sabellicus, a cognomen which he adopted on being crowned poet in the pedantic academy of Pomponius Lætus. He was a contemporary of Columbus and makes brief mention of his discoveries in the eighth book of the tenth Ennead of his universal history. By some writers he is called the Livy of his time; others accuse him of being full of misrepresentations in favor of Venice. The older Scaliger charges him with venality, and with being swayed by Venetian gold.

assalto. Sostennero i Veniziani allora l'empito del nemico, per numero di navi e di combattenti superiore, e durò il conflitto atroce per molte ore. Rare fiate fu combattuto contro simili nemici con tanta uccisione, perchè a pena si costuma d'attaccarsi contro di loro, se non per occasione. Affermano alcuni, che vi furono presenti, esser morte delle ciurme Veniziane da trecento uomini. Altri dicono che fu meno: morì in quella zuffa Lorenzo Michele capitano d'una galera e Giovanni Delfino, d'altro capitano fratello. Era durata la zuffa dal fare del giorno fin' ad ore venti, e erano le genti Veniziane mal trattate. Era gia la nave Delfina in potere de' nemici quando le altre ad una ad una si renderono. Narrano alcuni, che furono di quel aspro conflitto partecipi, aver numerato nelle loro navi da prode a poppe ottanta valorosi uomini estinti, i quali dal nemico veduti lo mossero a gemere e dire con sdegno, che così avevano voluto, i Veniziani. I corpi morti furono gettati nel mare, i feriti posti nel lido. Quei che rimasero vivi seguirono con e navi il capitan vittorioso sin' a Lisbona e ivi furono tutti licenziati . . . Quivi furono i Veniziani benigna mente ricevuti dal Re, gli infermi furono medicati, gli altri ebbero abitie denari secondo laloro condizione. . . . Oltre ciò vietò in tutto il Regno, che alcuno non comprafse della preda Veniziana, portata dai corsali. La nuova dell' avuta rovina non poco afflisse la città, erano perduti in quella mercatanzia

da ducento mila ducati ; ma il danno particolare degli uomini uccisi diede maggior afflizone."

Marc. Ant. Sabelico. Hist. Venet., decad. iv., lib. iii.

No. X.

AMERIGO VESPUCCI.

AMONG the earliest and most intelligent of the voyagers who followed the track of Columbus, was Amerigo Vespucci. He has been considered by many as the first discoverer of the southern continent, and by a singular caprice of fortune, his name has been given to the whole of the New World. It has been strenuously insisted, however, that he had no claim to the title of a discoverer ; that he merely sailed in a subordinate capacity in a squadron commanded by others ; that the account of his first voyage is a fabrication ; and that he did not visit the mainland until after it had been discovered and coasted by Columbus. As this question has been made a matter of warm and voluminous controversy, it is proper to take a summary view of it in the present work.

Amerigo Vespucci was born in Florence, March 9, 1451, of a noble, but not at that time a wealthy family ; his father's name was Anastatio ; his mother's was Elizabetta Mini. He was the third of their sons, and received an excellent education under his uncle, Georgio Antonio Vespucci, a learned friar of the Fra-

ternity of San Marco, who was instructor to several illustrious personages of that period.

Amerigo Vespucci visited Spain, and took up his residence in Seville to attend to some commercial transactions on account of the family of the Medici of Florence, and to repair, by his ingenuity, the losses and misfortunes of an unskilful brother.*

The date of his arrival in Spain is uncertain, but from comparing dates and circumstances mentioned in his letters, he must have been at Seville when Columbus returned from his first voyage.

Padre Stanislaus Canovai, Professor of Mathematics at Florence, who has published the life and voyages of Amerigo Vespucci, says that he was commissioned by King Ferdinand, and sent with Columbus in his second voyage in 1493. He states this on the authority of a passage in the *Cosmography* of Sebastian Munster, published at Basle in 1550†; but Munster mentions Vespucci as having accompanied Columbus in his first voyage; the reference of Canovai is therefore incorrect; and the suggestion of Munster is disproved by the letters of Vespucci, in which he states his having been stimulated by the accounts brought of the newly discovered regions. He never mentions such a voyage in any of his letters; which he most probably would have done, or rather would have made

* Bandini, *Vita d'Amerigo Vespucci.*

† *Cosm.*, Munst., p. 1108.

it the subject of a copious letter, had he actually performed it.

The first notice of a positive form which we have of Vespucci, as resident in Spain, is early in 1496. He appears, from documents in the royal archives at Seville, to have acted as agent or factor for the house of Juanoto Berardi, a rich Florentine merchant, resident in Seville; who had contracted to furnish the Spanish sovereigns with three several armaments, of four vessels each, for the service of the newly discovered countries. He may have been one of the principals in this affair, which was transacted in the name of this established house. Berardi died in December, 1495, and in the following January we find Amerigo Vespucci attending to the concerns of the expeditions, and settling with the masters of the ships for their pay and maintenance, according to the agreements made between them and the late Juanoto Berardi. On the 12th January, 1496, he received on this account ten thousand *maravedis* from Bernardo Pinelo the royal treasurer. He went on preparing all things for the despatch of four caravels to sail under the same contract between the sovereigns and the house of Berardi, and sent them to sea on the 3d of February, 1496; but on the 8th they met with a storm and were wrecked; the crews were saved with the loss of only three men.*

* These particulars are from manuscript Memoranda, extracted from the royal archives, by the last accurate historian Muñoz.

While thus employed, Amerigo Vespucci, of course, had occasional opportunity of conversing with Columbus, with whom according to the expression of the Admiral himself, in one of his letters to his son Diego, he appears to have been always on friendly terms. From these conversations, and from his agency in these expeditions, he soon became excited to visit the newly discovered countries, and to participate in enterprises, which were the theme of every tongue. Having made himself well acquainted with geographical and nautical science he prepared to launch into the career of discovery. It was not very long before he carried this design into execution.

In 1498, Columbus, in his third voyage, discovered the coast of Paria, on Terra Firma; which he at that time imagined to be a great island, but that a vast continent lay immediately adjacent. He sent to Spain specimens of pearls found on this coast, and gave the most sanguine accounts of the supposed riches of the country.

In 1499, an expedition of four vessels under command of Alonso de Ojeda, was fitted out from Spain, and sailed for Paria, guided by charts and letters sent to the government by Columbus. These were communicated to Ojeda by his patron the Bishop Fonseca, who had the superintendence of Indian affairs, and who furnished him also with a warrant to undertake the voyage.

It is presumed that Vespucci aided in fitting out the armament, and sailed in a vessel belonging to the house of Berardi, and in this way was enabled to take a share in the gains and losses of the expedition; for Isabella, as queen of Castile, had rigorously forbidden all strangers to trade with her transatlantic possessions, not even excepting the natives of the kingdom of Arragon.

This squadron visited Paria and several hundred miles of the coast, which they ascertained to be Terra Firma. They returned in June, 1500; and on the 18th of July, in that year, Amerigo Vespucci wrote an account of his voyage to Lorenzo de Pier Francisco de Medici of Florence, which remained concealed in manuscript until brought to light and published by Bandini in 1745.

In his account of this voyage, and in every other narrative of his different expeditions, Vespucci never mentions any other person concerned in the enterprise. He gives the time of his sailing, and states that he went with two caravels, which were probably his share of the expedition, or rather vessels sent by the house of Berardi. He gives an interesting narrative of the voyage, and of the various transactions with the natives, which corresponds, in many substantial points, with the accounts furnished by Ojeda and his mariners of their voyage, in a lawsuit hereafter mentioned.

In May, 1501, Vespucci having suddenly left Spain,

sailed in the service of Emanuel, King of Portugal; in the course of which expedition he visited the coast of Brazil. He gives an account of this voyage in a second letter to Lorenzo de Pier Francisco de Medici, which also remained in manuscript until published by Bartolozzi in 1789.*

No record or notice of any such voyage undertaken by Amerigo Vespucci, at the command of Emanuel, is to be found in the archives of the Torre do Tombo, the general archives of Portugal, which have been repeatedly and diligently searched for the purpose. It is singular also that his name is not to be found in any of the Portuguese historians, who in general were very particular in naming all navigators who held any important station among them, or rendered any distinguished services. That Vespucci did sail along the coasts, however, is not questioned. His nephew, after his death, in the course of evidence on some points of dispute, gave the correct latitude of Cape St. Augustine, which he said he had extracted from his uncle's journal.

In 1504, Vespucci wrote a third letter to the same Lorenzo de Medici, containing a more extended account of the voyage just alluded to in the service of Portugal. This was the first of his narratives that appeared in print. It appears to have been published in Latin, at Strasburgh, as early as 1505, under the title

* Bartolozzi, *Recherche Historico*. Firenze, 1789.

*Americus Vesputius de Orbe Antarctica per Regem Portugalliæ pridem inventa.**

An edition of this letter was printed in Vicenza in 1507, in an anonymous collection of voyages edited by Francanzio di Monte Alboddo, an inhabitant of Vicenza. It was reprinted in Italian in 1508, at Milan, and also in Latin, in a book entitled *Itinerarium Portugalensium.* In making the present illustration, the Milan edition in Italian† has been consulted, and also a Latin translation of it by Simon Grinæus, in his *Novus Orbis*, published at Basle in 1532. It relates entire the first voyage of Vespucci from Lisbon to the Brazils in 1501.

* Panzer, tom. vi., p. 33, *apud Esame Critico*, p. 88. Anotazione 1.

† This rare book, in the possession of O. Rich, Esq., is believed to be the oldest printed collection of voyages extant. It has not the pages numbered; the sheets are merely marked with a letter of the alphabet at the foot of each eighth page. It contains the earliest account of the voyages of Columbus, from his first departure until his arrival at Cadiz in chains. The letter of Vespucci to Lorenzo de Medici occupies the fifth book of this little volume. It is stated to have been originally written in Spanish, and translated into Italian by a person of the name of Jocondo An earlier edition is stated to have been printed in Venice by Alberto Vercellese, in 1504. The author is said to have been Angelo Trivigiani, secretary to the Venetian ambassador in Spain. This Trivigiani appears to have collected many of the particulars of the voyages of Columbus from the manuscript decades of Peter Martyr, who erroneously lays the charge of the plagiarism to Aloysius Cadamosto, whose voyages are inserted in the same collection. The book was entitled, *Libretto di tutta la navigazione del Re de Espagna, delle Isole e terreni nuovomente trovati.*

It is from this voyage to the Brazils that Amerigo Vespucci was first considered the discoverer of Terra Firma; and his name was at first applied to these southern regions, though afterwards extended to the whole continent. The merits of his voyage were however greatly exaggerated. The Brazils had been previously discovered, and formally taken possession of for Spain, in 1500, by Vicente Yañez Pinzon; and also in the same year, by Pedro Alvarez Cabral, on the part of Portugal; circumstances unknown however to Vespucci and his associates. The country remained in possession of Portugal, in conformity to the line of demarcation agreed on between the two nations.

Vespucci made a second voyage in the service of Portugal. He says that he commanded a caravel in a squadron of six vessels destined for the discovery of Malacca, which they had heard to be the great depot and magazine of all the trade between the Ganges and the Indian Sea. Such an expedition did sail about this time, under the command of Gonzalo Coelho. The squadron sailed, according to Vespucci, on the 10th of May, 1503. It stopped at the Cape Verde Islands for refreshments, and afterwards sailed by the coast of Sierra Leone, but was prevented from landing by contrary winds and a turbulent sea. Standing to the southwest, they ran three hundred leagues, until they were three degrees to the southward of the

equinoctial line, where they discovered an uninhabited island, about two leagues in length and one in breadth. Here, on the 10th of August, by mismanagement, the commander of the squadron ran his vessel on a rock and lost her. While the other vessels were assisting to save the crew and property from the wreck, Amerigo Vespucci was despatched in his caravel to search for a safe harbor in the island. He departed in his vessel without his long-boat, and with less than half of his crew, the rest having gone in the boat to the assistance of the wreck. Vespucci found a harbor, but waited in vain for several days for the arrival of the ships. Standing out to sea, he met with a solitary vessel, and learned that the ship of the commander had sunk, and the rest had proceeded onwards. In company with this vessel he stood for the Brazils, according to a command of the King, in case that any vessel should be parted from the fleet. Arriving on the coast, he discovered the famous Bay of All Saints, where he remained upward of two months, in hopes of being joined by the rest of the fleet. He at length ran two hundred and sixty leagues farther south, where he remained five months, building a fort and taking in a cargo of Brazil-wood. Then, leaving in the fortress a garrison of twenty-four men with arms and ammunition, he set sail for Lisbon, where he arrived in June, 1504.* The commander of the squadron and the other four ships were never heard of afterwards.

* Letter of Vespucci to Soderini or Renato. Edit. of Canovia.

Vespucci does not appear to have received the reward from the King of Portugal that his services merited, for we find him at Seville in early 1505, on his way to the Spanish court, in quest of employment; and he was bearer of a letter from Columbus to his son Diego, dated February 5th, which, while it speaks warmly of him as a friend, intimates his having been unfortunate. The following is the letter:

"My DEAR SON,—Diego Mendez departed hence on Monday, the third of this month. After his departure I conversed with Amerigo Vespucci, the bearer of this who goes there (to court) summoned on affairs of navigation. Fortune has been adverse to him as to many others. His labors have not profited him as much as they reasonably should have done. He goes on my account, and with much desire to do something that may result to my advantage, if within his power. I cannot ascertain here in what I can employ him, that will be serviceable to me, for I do not know what may be there required. He goes with the determination to do all that is possible for me; see in what he may be of advantage and co-operate with him, that he may say and do everything, and put his plans in operation; and let all be done secretly, that he may not be suspected. I have said everything to him that I can say touching the business, and have informed him of the pay I have received, and what is due, etc." *

* Navarrete, *Colec. Viag.*, tom. i., p. 351.

About this time Amerigo Vespucci received letters of naturalization from King Ferdinand, and shortly afterwards he and Vicente Yañez Pinzon were named captains of an armada about to be sent out in the spice trade and to make discoveries. There is a royal order, dated Toro, 11th April, 1507, for twelve thousand *maravedis* for an outfit for "Americo de Vespuche, resident of Seville." Preparations were made for this voyage, and vessels procured and fitted out, but it was eventually abandoned. There are memoranda existing concerning it, dated in 1506, 1507, and 1508, from which it appears that Amerigo Vespucci remained at Seville, attending to the fluctuating concerns of this squadron, until the destination of the vessels was changed, their equipments were sold, and the accounts settled. During this time he had a salary of thirty thousand *maravedis*. On the 22d of March, 1508, he received the appointment of principal pilot, with a salary of seventy thousand *maravedis*. His chief duties were to prepare charts, examine pilots, superintend the fitting-out of expeditions, and prescribe the route that vessels were to pursue in their voyages to the New World. He appears to have remained at Seville, and to have retained this office until his death, on the 22d of February, 1512. His widow, Maria Corezo, enjoyed a pension of ten thousand *maravedis*. After his death, his nephew, Juan Vespucci, was nominated pilot, with a salary of twenty thousand *maravedis*, commencing on the 22d

of May, 1512. Peter Martyr speaks with high commendation of this young man. "Young Vesputius is one to whom Americus Vesputius, his uncle, left the exact knowledge of the mariner's faculties, as it were, by inheritance, after his death; for he was a very expert master in the knowledge of his carde, his compasse, and the elevation of the pole starre by the quadrant. . . . Vesputius is my very familiar friend, and a wittie young man, in whose company I take great pleasure, and therefore use him oftentymes for my guest. He hath also made many voyages into these coasts, and diligently noted such things as he hath seen."*

Vespucci, the nephew, continued in this situation during the lifetime of Fonseca, who had been the patron of his uncle and his family. He was divested of his pay and his employ by a letter of the Council, dated the 18th of March, 1525, shortly after the death of the Bishop. No further notice of Vespucci is to be found in the archives of the Indies.

Such is a brief view of the career of Amerigo Vespucci; it remains to notice the points of controversy. Shortly after his return from this last expedition to the Brazils, he wrote a letter dated Lisbon, 4th September, 1504, containing a summary account of all his voyages. This letter is of special importance to the matter under investigation, as it is the only one

* Peter Martyr, decad. iii., lib. v. Eden's English translation.

known that relates to the disputed voyage, which would establish him as the discoverer of Terra Firma. It is presumed to have been written in Latin, and was addressed to René, Duke of Lorraine, who assumed the title of King of Sicily and Jerusalem.

The earliest known edition of this letter was published in Latin in 1507, at St. Diez in Lorraine. A copy of it has been found in the library of the Vatican (No. 9688) by the Abbe Cancellieri. In preparing the present illustration a reprint of this letter in Latin has been consulted, inserted in the *Novus Orbis* of Grinæus, published at Bath in 1532. The letter contains a spirited narrative of four voyages which he asserts to have made to the New World. In the prologue he excuses the liberty of addressing King René by calling to his recollection the ancient intimacy of their youth when studying the rudiments of science together under the paternal uncle of the voyager; and adds that if the present narrative should not altogether please his majesty, he must plead to him as Pliny said to Mæcenas, that he used formerly to be amused with his triflings.

In the prologue to this letter he informs King René that affairs of commerce had brought him to Spain, where he had experienced the various changes of fortune attendant on such transactions, and was induced to abandon that pursuit and direct his labors to objects of a more elevated and stable nature. He therefore

purposed to contemplate various parts of the world and to behold the marvels which it contains. To this object both time and place were favorable; for King Ferdinand was then preparing four vessels for the discovery of new lands in the West and appointed him among the number of those who went in the expedition. "We departed," he adds, "from the port of Cadiz, May 20, 1497, taking our course on the great gulf of ocean; in which voyage we employed eighteen months, discovering many lands and innumerable islands, chiefly inhabited, of which our ancestors make no mention."

A duplicate of this letter appears to have been sent at the same time (written, it is said, in Italian)to Piere Soderini, afterwards Gonfalonier of Florence, which was some years subsequently published in Italy, not earlier than 1510, and entitled, *Lettera de Amerigo Vespucci delle Isole nuvoamente trovate in quatro suoi viaggi.* We have consulted the edition of this letter in Italian, inserted in the publication of Padre Stanislaus Canovai, already referred to.

It has been suggested by an Italian writer that this letter was written by Vespucci to Soderini only, and the address altered to King René through the flattery or mistake of the Lorraine editor, without perceiving how unsuitable the reference to former intimacy intended for Soderini was when applied to a sovereign. The person making this remark can hardly have read

the prologue to the Latin edition, in which the title of "your majesty" is frequently repeated and the term "illustrious king" employed. It was first published also in Lorraine, the domains of René, and the publisher would not probably have presumed to take such a liberty with his sovereign's name. It becomes a question whether Vespucci addressed the same letter to King René and to Piere Soderini, both of them having been educated with him, or whether he sent a copy of this letter to Soderini, which subsequently found its way into print. The address to Soderini may have been substituted through mistake by the Italian publisher. Neither of the publications could have been made under the supervision of Vespucci.

The voyage specified in this letter as having taken place in 1497, is the great point in controversy. It is strenuously asserted that no such voyage took place; and that the first expedition of Vespucci to the coast of Paria was in the enterprise commanded by Ojeda, in 1499. The books of the *armadas* existing in the archives of the Indies at Seville, have been diligently examined, but no record of such voyage has been found, nor any official documents relating to it. Those most experienced in Spanish colonial regulations insist that no command like that pretended by Vespucci could have been given to a stranger, till he had first received letters of naturalization from the sovereigns for the kingdom of Castile, and he did not obtain such till

1505, when they were granted to him as preparatory to giving him the command in conjunction with Pinzon.

His account of a voyage made by him in 1497, therefore, is alleged to be a fabrication for the purpose of claiming the discovery of Paria; or rather it is affirmed that he has divided the voyage which he actually made with Ojeda, in 1499, into two; taking a number of incidents from his real voyage, altering them a little, and enlarging them with descriptions of the countries and people so as to make a plausible narrative which he gives as a distinct voyage; and antedating his departure to 1497, so as to make himself appear the first discoverer of Paria.

In support of this charge various coincidences have been pointed out between his voyage said to have taken place in 1497, and that described in his first letter to Lorenzo de Medici in 1499. These coincidences are with respect to places visited, transactions and battles with the natives, and the number of Indians carried to Spain and sold as slaves.

But the credibility of this voyage has been put to a stronger test. About 1503, a suit was instituted against the Crown of Spain by Don Diego, son and heir of Columbus, for the government of certain parts of Terra Firma, and for a share in the revenue arising from them, conformably to the capitulations made between the sovereigns and his father. It was the object of the Crown to disprove the discovery of the

coast of Paria and the Pearl Islands by Columbus; as it was maintained that unless he had discovered them, the claim of his heir with respect to them would be of no validity.

In the course of this suit a particular examination of witnesses took place in 1512–13 in the fiscal court. Alonso de Ojeda and nearly a hundred other persons were interrogated on oath; that voyager having been the first to visit the coast of Paria after Columbus had left it, and that within a very few months. The interrogatories of these witnesses and their replies are still extant in the archives of the Indies at Seville, in a packet of papers entitled "Papers belonging to the Admiral Don Luis Colon about the conservation of his privileges, from ann. 1515 to 1564." The author of the present work has two several copies of these interrogatories lying before him. One made by the late historian, Muñoz, and the other made in 1826, and signed by Don Jose de la Higuera y Lara, keeper of the general archives of the Indies of Seville. In the course of this testimony, the fact that Amerigo Vespucci accompanied Ojeda in this voyage of 1499, appears manifest, first from the deposition of Ojeda himself. The following are the words of the record: "In this voyage which this said witness made he took with him Juan de la Cosa and Morego Vespuche [Amerigo Vespucci] and other pilots." * Secondly, from the

* "En este viage que este dicho testigo hizo trujo consigo a Juan de la Cosa piloto, e Morego Vespuche, e otros pilotos."

coincidence of many parts of the narrative of Vespucci with events in this voyage of Ojeda. Among these coincidences one is particularly striking. Vespucci in his letter to Lorenzo de Medici, and also in that to René or Soderini, says that his ships after leaving the coast of Terra Firma stopped at Hispaniola where they remained about two months and a half procuring provisions, during which time, he adds, "we had many perils and troubles with the very Christians who were in that island with Columbus, and I believe through envy." *

Now it is well known that Ojeda passed some time on the western end of the island victualling his ships; and that serious dissension took place between him and the Spaniards in those parts, and the party sent by Columbus under Roldan to keep a watch upon his movements. If then Vespucci, as is stated upon oath, really accompanied Ojeda in this voyage, the inference appears almost irresistible, that he had not made the previous voyage of 1497, for the fact would have been well known to Ojeda; he would have considered Vespucci as the original discoverer, and would have had no

* "Per la necessita del mantenimento fummo all' Isola d' Antiglia [Hispaniola] che é questa che descoperse Cristoval Colombo piú anni fa, dove facemmo molto mantenimento, e stemmo due mesi e 17 giorni; dove passammo moti pericoli e travagli con li medesimi christiani que in questa isola stavanno col Colombo (credo per invidia)."—Letter of Vespucci; Edit. of Canovai.

motive for depriving him of the merit of it to give it to Columbus with whom Ojeda was not upon friendly terms.

Ojeda, however, expressly declares that the coast had been discovered by Columbus. On being asked how he knew the fact, he replied, because he saw the chart of the country discovered which Columbus sent at the time to the King and Queen, and that he came off immediately on a voyage of discovery and found what there was therein set down as discovered by the Admiral was correct.*

Another witness, Bernaldo de Haro, states that he had been with the Admiral, and had written (or rather copied) a letter for the Admiral to the King and Queen, designating in an accompanying sea-chart the courses and steerings and winds by which he had arrived at Paria; and that this witness had heard that from this chart others had been made, and that Pedro Alonzo Niño and Ojeda and others who had since visited these countries, had been guided by the same.†

Francisco de Molares, one of the best and most credible of all the pilots, testified that he saw a sea-chart

* "Preguntado como lo sabe; dijo—que lo sabe porque vió este testigo la figura que el dicho Almirante al dicho tiempo embió á Castilla al Rey e Reyna neustros Señores de lo que habia descubierto, y porqua este testigo luego vino a descubrir y halló que era verdad lo que dicho tiene que el dicho Almirante descubrio." MS. Process of D. Diego Colon, pregunta 2.

† "Este testigo escrivió una carta que el Almirante escriviera al Rey a Reyna N. N. S. S. haciendo les saber las perlas e cosas

which Columbus had made of the coast of Paria, *and he believed that all governed themselves by it.**

Numerous witnesses in this process testify to the fact that Paria was first discovered by Columbus. Las Casas, who had been at the pains of counting them, says that this fact was established by twenty-five eye-witnesses and sixty ear-witnesses. Many of them testify also that the coast south of Paria, and that extending west of the island of Margarita, away to Venezuela, which Vespucci states to have been discovered by himself in 1497, was now first discovered by Ojeda, and had never before been visited either by the Admiral "or any other Christian whatever."

Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal says that all the voyages of discovery which were made to the Terra Firma, were made by persons who had sailed with the Admiral, or been benefited by his instructions and directions, following the course he had laid down†; and the same

que habia hallado, y le embió señalado con la dicha carta, en una carta de marear, los rumbos y vientos por donde habia llegado á la Paria, e que este testigo oyó decir como pr. aquella carte se habian hecho otras e por ellas habian venido Pedro Alonzo Merino [Niño] e Ojeda e otros que despues han ido á aquellas partes."—*Idem*, pregunta 9.

* Process of D. Diego Colon, pregunta 10.

† "Que en todos los viages que algunos hicieron descubriendo en la dicha tierra, ivan personas que ovieron navegado con el dicho Almirante, y a ellos mostró muchas cosas de marear, y ellos por imitacion é industria del dicho Almirante las aprendian y aprendieron e seguendo ag°. que el dicho Almirante les habia mostrado, hicieron los viages que descubrieron en al Terra Firma."—Process, pregunta 10.

is testified by many other pilots and mariners of reputation and experience.

It would be a singular circumstance, if none of these witnesses, many of whom must have sailed in the same squadron with Vespucci along this coast in 1499, should have known that he had discovered and explored it two years previously. If that had really been the case, what motive could he have for concealing the fact? and why, if they knew it, should they not proclaim it? Vespucci states his voyage in 1497 to have been made with four caravels; that they returned in October, in 1498, and that he sailed again with two caravels in May, 1499 (the date of Ojeda's departure). Many of the mariners would therefore have been present in both voyages. Why, too, should Ojeda and the other pilots guide themselves by the charts of Columbus, when they had a man on board so learned in nautical science, and who, from his own recent observations, was practically acquainted with the coast? Not a word however is mentioned of the voyage and discovery of Vespucci by any of the pilots, though every other voyage is cited; nor does there even a seaman appear who has accompanied him in his asserted voyage.

Another strong circumstance against the reality of this voyage is, that it was not brought forward in this trial to defeat the claims of the heirs of Columbus. Vespucci states the voyage to have been undertaken with the knowledge and countenance of King Ferdi-

nand; it must, therefore, have been avowed and notorious. Vespucci was living at Seville in 1508, at the time of the commencement of this suit, and for four years afterward, a salaried servant of the Crown. Many of the pilots and mariners must have been at hand, who sailed with him in his pretended enterprise. If this voyage had once been proved, it would completely have settled the question, as far as concerned the coast of Paria, in favor of the Crown. Yet no testimony appears ever to have been taken from Vespucci while living; and when the interrogatories were made in the fiscal court in 1512–13, not one of the seamen is brought up to give evidence. A voyage so important in its nature, and so essential to the question in dispute, is not even alluded to, while useless pains are taken to wrest evidence from the voyage of Ojeda, undertaken at a subsequent period.

It is a circumstance worthy of notice, that Vespucci commences his first letter to Lorenzo de Medici in 1500, within a month after his return from the voyage he had actually made to Paria, and apologizes for his long silence, by saying that nothing had occurred worthy of mention, ("*e gran tempo che non ho scritto á vostra magnifizensa, e non lo ha causato altra cosa ne nessuna salvo non mi essere occorso cosa degna di memoria,*") and proceeds eagerly to tell him the wonders he had witnessed in the expedition from which he had but just returned. It would be a singular for-

getfulness to say that nothing had occurred of importance, if he had made a previous voyage of eighteen months in 1497–8 to this newly discovered world; and it would be almost equally strange that he should not make the slightest allusion to it in his letter.

It has been the endeavor of the author to examine this question dispassionately; and after considering the statements and arguments advanced on either side, he cannot resist a conviction, that the voyage stated to have been made in 1497 did not take place, and that Vespucci has no title to the first discovery of the coast of Paria.

The question is extremely perplexing from the difficulty of assigning sufficient motives for so gross a deception. When Vespucci wrote his letters there was no doubt entertained but that Columbus had discovered the mainland in his first voyage; Cuba being always considered the extremity of Asia, until circumnavigated in 1508. Vespucci may have supposed Brazil, Paria, and the rest of that coast, part of a distinct continent, and have been anxious to arrogate to himself the fame of its discovery. It has been asserted that on his return from his voyage to the Brazils, he prepared a maritime chart, in which he gave his name to that part of the mainland; but this assertion does not seem to be well substantiated. It would rather seem that his name was given to that part of the continent by others, as a tribute paid to his supposed merit, in con-

sequence of having read his own account of his voyage.*

It is singular that Fernando, the son of Columbus, in his biography of his father, should bring no charge against Vespucci of endeavoring to supplant the Admiral in this discovery. Herrera has been cited as the first to bring the accusation, in his *History of the Indies*, first published in 1601, and has been much criticised in consequence, by the advocates of Vespucci, as making the charge on his mere assertion. But, in

* The first suggestion of the name appears to have been in the Latin work already cited, published in St. Diez, in Lorraine, in 1507, in which was inserted the letter of Vespucci to King René. The author, after speaking of the other three parts of the world, Asia, Africa, and Europe, recommends that the fourth shall be called Amerigo, or America, after Vespucci, whom he imagined its discoverer.

NOTE TO THE REVISED EDITION, 1848.—Humboldt, in his *Examen Critique*, published in Paris, in 1837, says: "I have been so happy as to discover, very recently, the name and the literary relations of the mysterious personage who (in 1507) was the first to propose the name of America to designate the new continent, and who concealed himself under the Grecianized name Hylacomylas." He then, by a long and ingenious investigation, shows that the real name of this personage was Martin Waldseemüller, of Fribourg, an eminent cosmographer, patronized by René, Duke of Lorraine; who no doubt put in his hands the letter received by him from Amerigo Vespucci. The geographical works of Waldseemüller, under the assumed name of Hylacomylas, had a wide circulation, went through repeated editions, and propagated the use of the name America throughout the world. There is no reason to suppose that this application of the name was in anywise suggested by Amerigo Vespucci. It appears to have been entirely gratuitous on the part of Waldseemüller.

fact, Herrera did but copy what he found written by Las Casas, who had the proceedings of the fiscal court lying before him, and was moved to indignation against Vespucci, by which he considered proofs of great imposture.

It has been suggested that Vespucci was instigated to this deception at the time when he was seeking employment in the colonial service of Spain; and that he did it to conciliate the Bishop Fonseca, who was desirous of anything that might injure the interest of Columbus. In corroboration of his opinion, the patronage is cited which was ever shown by Fonseca to Vespucci and his family. This is not however a satisfactory reason, since it does not appear that the Bishop ever made any use of the fabrication. Perhaps some other means might be found of accounting for this spurious narration, without implicating the veracity of Vespucci. It may have been the blunder of some editor, or the interpolation of some book-maker, eager, as in the case of Trivigiani with the manuscripts of Peter Martyr, to gather together disjointed materials, and fabricate a work to gratify the prevalent passion of the day.

In the various editions of the letters of Vespucci, the grossest variations and inconsistencies in dates will be found, evidently the errors of hasty and careless publishers. Several of these have been corrected by the modern authors who have inserted these letters in

their works.* The same disregard to exactness which led to these blunders, may have produced the interpolation of this voyage, garbled out of the letters of Vespucci and the accounts of other voyagers. This is merely suggested as a possible mode of accounting for what appears so decidedly to be a fabrication, yet which we are loath to attribute to a man of the good sense, the character, and the reputed merit of Vespucci.

After all this is a question more of curiosity than of real moment, although it is one of those perplexing points about which grave men will continue to write weary volumes, until the subject acquires a fictitious importance from the mountain of controversy heaped upon it. It has become a question of local pride with the *literati* of Florence; and they emulate each other with patriotic zeal, to vindicate the fame of their distinguished countryman. This zeal is laudable when kept within proper limits; but it is to be regretted

* An instance of these errors may be cited in the edition of the letter of Amerigo Vespucci to King René, inserted by Grinæus in his *Novus Orbis*, in 1532. In this Vespucci is made to state that he sailed from Cadiz, May 20, MCCCCXCVII. (1497,) that he was eighteen months absent, and returned to Cadiz, October 15, MCCCCXCIX. (1499,) which would constitute an absence of 29 months. He states his departure from Cadiz, on his second voyage, Sunday, May 11th, MCCCCLXXXIX. (1489,) which would have made his second voyage precede his first by eight years. If we substitute 1499 for 1489, the departure on his second voyage would still precede his return from his first by five months. Canovai, in his edition, has altered the date of the first return to 1498, to limit the voyage to eighteen months.

that some of them have so far been heated by controversy as to become irascible against the very memory of Columbus, and to seek to disparage his general fame, as if the ruin of it would add anything to the reputation of Vespucci. This is discreditable to their discernment and their liberality; it injures their cause, and shocks the feelings of mankind, who will not willingly see a name like that of Columbus, lightly or petulantly assailed in the course of these literary contests. It is a name consecrated in history, and is no longer the property of a city, or a state, or a nation, but of the whole world.

Neither should those who have a proper sense of the merit of Columbus put any part of his great renown at issue upon this minor dispute. Whether or not he was the discoverer of Paria, was a question of interest to his heirs, as a share of the government and revenues of that country depended upon it; but it is of no importance to his fame. In fact, the European who first reached the mainland of the New World was most probably Sebastian Cabot, a native of Venice, sailing in the employ of England. In 1497 he coasted its shores from Labrador to Florida; yet the English have never set up any pretensions on his account.

The glory of Columbus does not depend upon the parts of the country he visited or the extent of coast along which he sailed, it embraces the discovery of the whole western world. With respect to him, Ves-

pucci is as Yañez Pinzon, Bastides, Ojeda, Cabot, and the crowd of secondary discoverers, who followed in his track, and explored the realms to which he had led the way. When Columbus first touched a shore of the New World, even though a frontier island, he had achieved his enterprises; he had accomplished all that was necessary to his fame: the great problem of the ocean was solved; the world which lay beyond its western waters was discovered.

No. XI.

MARTIN ALONZO PINZON.

In the course of the trial in the fiscal court, between Don Diego and the Crown, an attempt was made to depreciate the merit of Columbus, and to ascribe the success of the great enterprise of discovery to the intelligence and spirit of Martin Alonzo Pinzon. It was the interest of the Crown to do so, to justify itself in withholding from the heirs of Columbus the extent of his stipulated reward. The examinations of witnesses in this trial were made at various times and places, and upon a set of interrogatories formally drawn up by order of the fiscal. They took place upwards of twenty years after the first voyage of Columbus, and the witnesses testified from recollection.

In reply to one of the interrogatories, Arias Perez

Pinzon, son of Martin Alonzo, declared, that, being once in Rome with his father on commercial affairs, before the time of the discovery, they had frequent conversations with a person learned in cosmography who was in the service of Pope Innocent VIII., and that being in the library of the Pope, this person showed them many manuscripts, from one of which his father gathered intimation of these new lands; for there was a passage by an historian as old as the time of Solomon, which said: "Navigate the Mediterranean Sea to the end of Spain and thence towards the setting sun, in a direction between north and south, until ninety-five degrees of longitude, and you will find the land of Cipango, fertile and abundant, and equal in greatness to Africa and Europe." A copy of this writing, he added, his father brought from Rome with an intention of going in search of that land, and frequently expressed such determination; and that, when Columbus came to Palos with his project of discovery, Martin Alonzo Pinzon showed him the manuscript, and ultimately gave it to him just before they sailed.

It is extremely probable that this manuscript, of which Arias Perez gives so vague an account from recollection, but which he appears to think the main thing that prompted Columbus to his undertaking, was no other than the work of Marco Polo, which, at that time, existed in manuscript in most of the Italian li-

braries. Martin Alonzo was evidently acquainted with the work of the Venetian, and it would appear, from various circumstances, that Columbus had a copy of it with him in his voyages, which may have been the manuscript above mentioned. Columbus had long before, however, had a knowledge of the work, if not by actual inspection, at least through his correspondence with Toscanelli in 1474, and had derived from it all the light it was capable of furnishing, before he ever came to Palos. It is questionable, also, whether the visit of Martin Alonzo to Rome, was not after his mind had been heated by conversation with Columbus in the convent of La Rabida. The testimony of Arias Perez is so worded as to leave it in doubt whether the visit was not in the very year prior to the discovery: "*Fue el dicho su padre á Roma aquel dicho año antes que fuese a descubrir.*" Arias Perez always mentions the manuscript as having been imparted to Columbus, after he had come to Palos with an intention of proceeding on the discovery.

Certain witnesses who were examined on behalf of the Crown, and to whom specific interrogatories were put, asserted, as has already been mentioned in a note to this work, that had it not been for Martin Alonzo Pinzon and his brothers, Columbus would have turned back for Spain, after having run seven or eight hundred leagues; being disheartened at not finding land, and dismayed by the mutiny and menaces of his crew.

This is stated by two or three as from personal knowledge, and by others from hearsay. It is said especially to have occurred on the 6th of October. On this day, according to the journal of Columbus, he had some conversation with Martin Alonzo, who was anxious that they should stand more to the southwest. The Admiral refused to do so, and it is very probable that some angry words may have passed between them. Various disputes appear to have taken place between Columbus and his colleagues respecting their route, previous to the discovery of land; in one or two instances he acceded to their wishes, and altered his course, but in general he was inflexible in standing to the west. The Pinzons also, in all probability, exerted their influence in quelling the murmurs of their townsmen and encouraging them to proceed, when ready to rebel against Columbus. These circumstances may have become mixed up in the vague recollections of the seamen who gave the foregoing extravagant testimony, and who were evidently disposed to exalt the merits of the Pinzons at the expense of Columbus. They were in some measure prompted also in their replies by the written interrogatories put by order of the fiscal, which specified the conversations said to have passed between Columbus and the Pinzons, and notwithstanding these guides they differed widely in their statements, and ran into many absurdities. In a manuscript record in possession of the Pinzon family, I have

even read the assertion of an old seaman, that Columbus, in his eagerness to compel the Pinzons to turn back to Spain, *fired upon their ships*, but, they continuing on, he was obliged to follow, and within two days afterwards discovered the island of Hispaniola.

It is evident the old sailor, if he really spoke conscientiously, mingled in his cloudy remembrance the disputes in the early part of the voyage, about altering their course to the southwest, and the desertion of Martin Alonzo, subsequent to the discovery of the Lucayos and Cuba, when, after parting company with the Admiral, he made the island of Hispaniola.

The witness most to be depended upon as to these points of inquiry, is the physician of Palos, Garcia Fernandez, a man of education, who sailed with Martin Alonzo Pinzon as steward of his ship, and of course was present at all the conversations which passed between the commanders. He testifies that Martin Alonzo urged Columbus to stand more to the southwest, and that the Admiral at length complied, but, finding no land in that direction, they turned again to the west; a statement which completely coincides with the journal of Columbus. He adds that the Admiral continually comforted and animated Martin Alonzo, and all others in his company. ("*Siempre los consolaba el dicho Almirante esforzandolos al dicho Martin Alonzo e á todos los que en su compania iban.*") When the physician was specifically

questioned as to the conversations pretended to have passed between the commanders, in which Columbus expressed a desire to turn back to Spain, he referred to the preceding statement, as the only answer he had to make to these interrogatories.

The extravagant testimony before mentioned appears never to have had any weight with the fiscal; and the accurate historian, Muñoz, who extracted all these points of evidence from the papers of the lawsuit, has not deemed them worthy of mention in his work. As these matters however remain on record in the archives of the Indies, and in the archives of the Pinzon family, in both of which I have had a full opportunity of inspecting them, I have thought it advisable to make these few observations on the subject; lest, in the rage for research, they might hereafter be drawn forth as a new discovery, on the strength of which to impugn the merits of Columbus.

No. XII.

RUMOR OF THE PILOT SAID TO HAVE DIED IN THE HOUSE OF COLUMBUS.

Among the various attempts to injure Columbus by those who were envious of his fame, was one intended to destroy all his merit as an original discoverer. It was said that he had received information of the exist-

ence of land in the western parts of the ocean from a tempest-tossed pilot who had been driven there by violent easterly winds, and who, on his return to Europe, had died in the house of Columbus, leaving in his possession the chart and journal of his voyage, by which he was guided to his discovery.

This story was first noticed by Oviedo, a contemporary of Columbus, in his *History of the Indies*, published in 1535. He mentions it as a rumor circulating among the vulgar, without foundation in truth.

Fernando Lopez de Gomara first brought it forward against Columbus. In his *History of the Indies*, published in 1552, he repeats the rumor in the vaguest terms, manifestly from Oviedo, but without the contradiction given to it by that author. He says that the name and country of the pilot were unknown, some terming him an Andalusian, sailing between the Canaries and Madeira, others a Biscayan, trading to England and France, and others a Portuguese, voyaging between Lisbon and Mina on the coast of Guinea. He expresses equal uncertainty whether the pilot brought the caravel to Portugal, to Madeira, or to one of the Azores. The only point on which the circulators of the rumor agreed, was that he died in the house of Columbus. Gomara adds that by this event Columbus was led to undertake his voyage to the new countries.*

* Gomara, *Hist. Ind.*, cap. 14.

The other early historians who mention Columbus and his voyages, and were his contemporaries, viz.: Sabellicus, Peter Martyr, Giustiniani, Bernaldes, commonly called the Curate of Los Palacios, Las Casas, Fernando, the son of the Admiral, and the anonymous author of a voyage of Columbus, translated from the Italian into Latin by Madrignano,* are all silent in regard to this report.

Benzoni, whose *History of the New World* was published in 1565, repeats the story from Gomara, with whom he was contemporary; but decidedly expresses his opinion that Gomara had mingled up much falsehood with some truth, for the purpose of detracting from the fame of Columbus, through jealousy that any one but a Spaniard should enjoy the honor of the discovery.†

Acosta notices the circumstance slightly in his *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, published in 1591, and takes it evidently from Gomara.‡

Mariana, in his *History of Spain*, published in 1592, also mentions it, but expresses a doubt of its

* *Navigatio Christophori Columbi, Madrignano Interprete.* It is contained in a collection of voyages called *Novus Orbis Regionum*, edition of 1555, but was originally published in Italian as written by Montalbodo Francanzano (or Francapano de Montaldo), in a collection of voyages entitled *Nuovo Mundo*, in Vicenza, in 1507.

† Girolamo Benzoni, *Hist. del Nuevo Mundo*, lib. i., fo. 12. In Venetia, 1572.

‡ Padre Joseph de Acosta, *Hist. Ind.*, lib. i., cap. 19.

truth, and derives his information manifestly from Gomara.*

Herrera, who published his history of the Indies in 1601, takes no notice of the story. In not noticing it he may be considered as rejecting it, for he is distinguished for his minuteness, and was well acquainted with Gomara's history, which he expressly contradicts on a point of considerable interest.†

Garcilaso de la Vega, a native of Cusco in Peru, revived the tale with very minute particulars, in his *Commentaries of the Incas*, published in 1609. He tells it smoothly and circumstantially; fixes the date of the occurrence 1484, "one year more or less"; states the name of the unfortunate pilot, Alonzo Sanchez de Huelva; the destination of his vessel, from the Canaries to the Madeira; and the unknown land to which they were driven, the island of Hispaniola. The pilot, he says, landed, took an altitude, and wrote an account of all he saw, and all that had occurred in the voyage. He then took in wood and water, and set out to seek his way home. He succeeded in returning, but the voyage was long and tempestuous, and twelve died of hunger and fatigue, out of seventeen, the original number of the crew. The five survivors arrived at Tercera, where they were hospitably entertained by Columbus, but all died in his

* Juan de Mariana, *Hist. Espagña*, lib. xxvi., cap. 3.
† Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. ii , lib. iii , cap. 1.

house in consequence of the hardships they had sustained; the pilot was the last that died, leaving his host heir to his papers. Columbus kept them profoundly secret, and by pursuing the route therein prescribed, obtained the credit of discovering the New World.*

Such are the material points of the circumstantial relation furnished by Garcilaso de la Vega one hundred and twenty years after the event. In regard to authority, he recollects to have heard the story when he was a child, as a subject of conversation between his father and the neighbors, and he refers to the histories of the Indies by Acosta and Gomara for confirmation. As the conversation to which he listened must have taken place sixty or seventy years after the date of the report, there had been sufficient time for the vague rumors to become arranged into a regular narrative, and thus we have not only the name, country, and destination of the pilot, but also the name of the unknown land to which his vessel was driven.

This account given by Garcilaso de la Vega has been adopted by many old historians, who have felt a confidence in the peremptory manner in which he relates it, and in the authorities to whom he refers. These have been echoed by others of more recent date; and thus a weighty charge of fraud and impost-

* *Commentarios de los Incas*, lib. i., cap. 3.

ure has been accumulated against Columbus, apparently supported by a crowd of respectable accusers.* The whole charge is to be traced to Gomara, who loosely repeated a vague rumor, without noticing the pointed contradiction given to it seventeen years before by Oviedo, an ear-witness, from whose book he appears to have actually gathered the report.

It is to be remarked that Gomara bears the character among historians of inaccuracy, and of great credulity in adopting unfounded stories.†

* Names of historians who either adopted this story in detail, or the charge against Columbus drawn from it:

Bernardo Aldrete, *Antiguedad, de España*, lib. iv., cap. 17, p. 567.

Roderigo Caro, *Antiguedad*, lib. iii., cap. 76.

Juan de Solorzana, *Ind. Jure*, tom. i., lib. i., cap. 5.

Fernando Pizarro, *Varones Illust. del Nuevo Mundo*, cap. 2.

Agostino Torniel, *Annal. Sacr.*, tom. i : *ann. Mund.*, 1931, No. 48.

Pet. Damarez or De Mariz, *Dial. iv. de Var. Hist.*, cap. 4.

Gregorio Garcia, *Orig. de los Indios*, lib. i., cap. 4, § 1.

Juan de Torquemanda, *Monarch*, *Ind.*, lib. xviii., cap. 1.

John Baptiste Riccioli, *Geograf. Reform.*, lib. iii.

To this list of old authors may be added many others of more recent date.

† "Francisco Lopez de Gomara, Presbitero, Sevillano, escribio con elegant estilo acerca de las cosas de las Indies, pero dexandose llevar de falsas narraciones."—*Hijos de Sevilla*, Numero ii., p. 42, Let. F. The same is stated in *Bibliotheca Hispaña Nova*, lib. i., p. 437.

"El Francisco Lopez de Gomara escrivio tantos barrones ó cosas que no son verdaderas, de que ha hecho mucho daño a muchos escritores e coronistas, que despues del Gomara han escrito en las cosas de la Nueva España . . . es porque les ha hecho errar el Gomara."—Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *Hist. de la Conquest de la Nueva España*, Fin. de cap. 18.

"Tenia Gomara doctrina y estilo . . . pero empleose en

It is unnecessary to give further refutation to this charge, especially as it is clear that Columbus communicated his idea of discovery to Paulo Toscanelli of Florence in 1474, ten years previous to the date assigned by Garcilaso de Vega for this occurrence.

No. XIII.

MARTIN BEHEM.

THIS able geographer was born in Nuremberg, in Germany, about the commencement of the year 1430. His ancestors were from the circle of Pilsner, in Bohemia, hence he is called by some writers Martin of Bohemia, and the resemblance of his own name to that of the country of his ancestors frequently occasions a confusion in the appellation.

It has been said by some that he studied under Philip Bervalde the elder, and by others under John Muller, otherwise called Regiomontanus, though De Murr, who has made diligent inquiry into his history, discredits both assertions. According to a correspondence between Behem and his uncle, discovered of late years by De Murr, it appears that the early part of his life was devoted to commerce. Some have given him the credit of discovering the island of Fayal,

ordinar sin discernimiento lo que halló escrito por sus antecesores, y dió credito á petrañas no solo falsas sino inverisimiles." —Juan Bautista Muñoz, *Hist. N. Mundo*, Prologo, p. 18.

but this is an error, arising probably from the circumstance that Job de Huertar, father-in-law of Behem, colonized that island in 1466.

He is supposed to have arrived at Portugal in 1481, while Alphonso V. was still on the throne; it is certain that shortly afterwards he was in high repute for his science in the court of Lisbon, insomuch that he was one of the council appointed by King John II. to improve the art of navigation, and by some he has received the whole credit of the memorable service rendered to commerce by that council, in the introduction of the astrolabe into nautical use.

In 1484 King John sent an expedition under Diego Cam, as Barros calls him, Cano according to others, to prosecute discoveries along the coast of Africa. In this expedition Behem sailed as cosmographer. They crossed the equinoctial line, discovered the coast of Congo, advanced to twenty-two degrees forty-five minutes of south latitude,* and erected two columns, on which were engraved the arms of Portugal, in the mouth of the river Zagra in Africa, which thence for some time took the name of the River of Columns.†

For the services rendered on this and on previous occasions, it is said that Behem was knighted by King John in 1485, though no mention is made of such a circumstance in any of the contemporary historians.

* Vasconcelos, lib. iv.
† Murr, *Notice sur M. Behaim.*

The principal proof of his having received this mark of distinction, is his having given himself the title of his globe of *Eques Lusitanus*.

In 1486 he married at Fayal the daughter of Job de Huertar, and is supposed to have remained there for some few years, where he had a son named Martin, born in 1489. During his residence at Lisbon and Fayal it is probable the acquaintance took place between him and Columbus, to which Herrera and others allude; and the Admiral may have heard from him some of the rumors circulating in the islands, of indications of western lands floating to their shores.

In 1491 he returned to Nuremburg to see his family, and while there, in 1492, he finished a terrestial globe, considered a masterpiece in those days, which he had undertaken at the request of the principal magistrates of his native city.

In 1593 he returned to Portugal, and from thence proceeded to Fayal.

In 1494 King John II., who had a high opinion of him, sent him to Flanders to his natural son Prince George, the intended heir of his crown. In the course of his voyage Behem was captured and carried to England, where he remained for three months detained by illness. Having recovered, he again put to sea, but was captured by a corsair and carried to France. Having ransomed himself, he proceeded to Antwerp and Bruges, but returned almost immedi-

ately to Portugal. Nothing more is known of him for several years, during which time it is supposed he remained with his family in Fayal, too old to make further voyages. In 1506 he went from Fayal to Lisbon, where he died.

The assertion that Behem had discovered the western world previous to Columbus, in the course of the voyage with Cam, was founded on a misinterpretation of a passage interpolated in the chronicle of Hartmann Schedel, a contemporary writer. This passage mentions, that when the voyagers were in the Southern Ocean not far from the coast, and had passed the line, they came into another hemisphere, where, when they looked towards the east, their shadows fell towards the south, on their right hand; that here they discovered a new world, unknown until then, and which for many years had never been sought except by the Genoese, and by them unsuccessfully.

"Hi duo, bono deorum auspicio, mare meridionale sulcantes, a littore non longo evagantes, superato circulo equinoctiali, in alterum orbem excepti sunt. Ubi ipsis stantibus orientem versus, umbra ad meridiem et dextram projiciebatur. Aperuêre igitur sua industria, alium orbem hactenus nobis incognitum et multis annis, a nullis quam Januensibus, licet frustra temptatum."

These lines are part of a passage which it is said is interpolated by a different hand, in the original manu-

script of the chronicle of Schedel. De Murr assures us that they are not to be found in the German translation of the book by George Alt, which was finished the 5th of October, 1493. But even if they were, they relate merely to the discovery which Diego Cam made of the southern hemisphere, previously unknown, and of the coast of Africa beyond the equator, all of which appears like a new world, and as such was talked of at the time.

The Genoese alluded to, who had made an unsuccessful attempt, were Antonio de Nolle with Bartholomeo, his brother, and Raphael de Nolle, his nephew. Antonio was of a noble family, and, for some disgust, left his country and went to Lisbon with his beforementioned relatives in two caravals; sailing whence in the employ of Portugal, they discovered the island St. Jago, etc.*

This interpolated passage of Schedel was likewise inserted into the work *De Europâ sub Frederico III.* of Æneas Silvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., who died in 1464, long before the voyage in question. The misinterpretation of the passage first gave rise to the incorrect assertion that Behem had discovered the New World prior to Columbus; as if it were possible such a circumstance could have happened without Behem's laying claim to the glory of the discovery, and without the world immediately resounding with

* Barros, decad. i., lib. ii., cap. 1. Lisbon, 1552.

so important an event. This error had been adopted by various authors without due examination; some of whom had likewise taken from Magellan the credit of having discovered the strait which goes by his name, and had given it to Behem. The error was too palpable to be generally prevalent, but was suddenly revived in the year 1786 by a French gentleman of highly respectable character of the name of Otto, then resident in New York, who addressed a letter to Dr. Franklin to be submitted to the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, in which he undertook to establish the title of Behem to the discovery of the New World. His memoir was published in the transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. ii., for 1786, article No. 35, and has been copied into the journals of most of the nations of Europe.

The authorities cited by M. Otto in support of this assertion are generally fallacious, and for the most part given without particular specification. His assertion has been diligently and satisfactorily refuted by Don Christoval Cladera.*

The grand proof of M. Otto is a globe which Behem made during his residence in Nuremburg, in 1492, the very year that Columbus set out on his first voyage of discovery. This globe, acccording to M. Otto, is still preserved in the library of Nuremburg, and on it are painted all the discoveries of Behem, which are

* *Investigaciones Historicas.* Madrid, 1794.

so situated that they can be no other than the coast of Brazil, and the straits of Magellan. This authority staggered many, and if supported, would demolish the claims of Columbus.

Unluckily for M. Otto, in his description of the globe, he depended on the inspection of a correspondent. The globe in the library of Nuremburg was made in 1520, by John Schoener, professor of mathematics,* long after the discoveries and death of Columbus and Behem. The real globe of Behem, made in 1492, does not contain any of the islands or shores of the New World, and thus proves that he was totally unacquainted with them. A copy, or planisphere, of Behem's globe is given by Cladera in his *Investigations.*

No. XIV.

VOYAGES OF THE SCANDINAVIANS.

MANY elaborate dissertations have been written to prove that discoveries were made by the Scandinavians on the northern coast of America long before the era of Columbus; but the subject appears still to be wrapped in much doubt and obscurity.

It has been asserted that the Norwegians, as early as the ninth century, discovered a great tract of land

* Cladera, *Investig. Hist.*, p. 115.

to the west of Iceland, which they called Grand Iceland; but this has been pronounced a fabulous tradition. The most plausible account is one given by Snorro Sturleson, in his *Saga* or *Chronicle of King Olaus*. According to this writer, one Biorn, of Iceland, sailing to Greenland in search of his father, from whom he had been separated by a storm, was driven by tempestuous weather far to the southwest, until he came in sight of a low country, covered with wood, with an island in its vicinity. The weather becoming favorable, he turned to the northeast without landing, and arrived safe at Greenland. His account of the country he had beheld, it is said, excited the enterprise of Leif, son of Eric Rauda (or Redhead), the first settler of Greenland. A vessel was fitted out, and Leif and Biorn departed alone in quest of this unknown land. They found a rocky and sterile island, to which they gave the name of Helleland; also a low sandy country covered with wood, to which they gave the name of Markland; and, two days afterwards, they observed a continuance of the coast, with an island to the north of it. This last they described as fertile, well wooded, producing agreeable fruits, and particularly grapes, a fruit with which they were unacquainted. On being informed by one of their companions, a German, of its qualities and name, they called the country from it, Vinland. They ascended a river, well stored with fish, particularly salmon, and

came to a lake from which the river took its origin, where they passed the winter. The climate appeared to them mild and pleasant; being accustomed to the rigorous climates of the north. On the shortest day, the sun was eight hours above the horizon. Hence it has been concluded that the country was about the 49th degree of north latitude, and was either Newfoundland, or some part of the coast of North America, about the Gulf of St. Lawrence.* It is added that the relatives of Leif made several voyages to Vinland; that they traded with the natives for furs; and that, in 1121, a bishop named Eric went from Greenland to Vinland to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. From this time, says Forster, we know nothing of Vinland, and there is every appearance that the tribe which still exists in the interior of Newfoundland, and which is so different from the other savages of North America, both in their appearance and mode of living, and always in a state of warfare with the Esquimaus of the northern coast, are descendants of the ancient Normans.

The author of the present work has not had the means of tracing this story to its original sources. He gives it on the authority of M. Malte-Brun and Mr. Forster. The latter extracts it from the *Saga* or *Chronicle* of Snorro, who was born in 1179, and wrote in 1215, so that his account was formed long after the

* Forster's *Northern Voyages*, book ii., chap. 2.

event is said to have taken place. Forster says: "The facts which we report have been collected from a great number of Icelandic manuscripts, and transmitted to us by Torfæus in his two works entitled *Veteris Grœnlandiæ Descriptio*, Hafnia, 1706, and *Historia Winlandiæ Antiquæ*, Hafnia, 1705." Forster appears to have no doubt of the authenticity of the facts. As far as the author of the present work has had experience in tracing these stories of early discoveries of portions of the New World, he has generally found them very confident deductions drawn from very vague and questionable facts. Learned men are too prone to give substance to mere shadows, when they assist some preconceived theory. Most of these accounts, when divested of the erudite comments of their editors, have proved little better than the traditionary fables, noticed in another part of this work, respecting the imaginary islands of St. Borondon and of the Seven Cities.

There is no great improbability however that such enterprising and roving voyagers as the Scandinavians may have wandered to the northern shores of America, about the coast of Labrador, or the shores of Newfoundland; and if the Icelandic manuscripts said to be of the thirteenth century can be relied upon as genuine, free from modern interpolation and correctly quoted, they would appear to prove the fact. But, granting the truth of the alleged discoveries,

they led to no more result than would the interchange of communication between the natives of Greenland and the Esquimaux. The knowledge of them appears not to have extended beyond their own nation, and to have been soon neglected and forgotten by themselves.

Another pretension to any early discovery of the American continent has been set up, founded on an alleged map and narrative of two brothers of the name of Zeno, of Venice; but it seems more invalid than those just mentioned. The following is the substance of this claim:

Nicolo Zeno, a noble Venetian, is said to have made a voyage to the north in 1380, in a vessel fitted out at his own cost, intending to visit England and Flanders; but meeting with a terrible tempest, was driven for many days he knew not whither, until he was cast away upon Friseland, an island much in dispute among geographers, but supposed to be the archipelago of the Ferroe Islands. The shipwrecked voyagers were assailed by the natives, but rescued by Zichmni, a prince of the islands, lying on the south side of Friseland, and duke of another district lying over against Scotland. Zeno entered into the service of this prince, and aided him in conquering Friseland and other northern islands. He was soon joined by his brother, Antonio Zeno, who remained fourteen years in those countries.

During his residence in Friseland, Antonio Zeno wrote to his brother Carlo, in Venice, giving an account of a report brought by a certain fisherman, about a land to the westward. According to a tale of this mariner, he had been one of a party who sailed from Friseland about twenty-six years before, in four fishing-boats. Being overtaken by a mighty tempest, they were driven about the sea for many days, until the boat containing himself and six companions was cast upon an island called Estotiland, about one thousand miles from Friseland. They were taken by the inhabitants, and carried to a fair and populous city, where the king sent for many interpreters to converse with them, but none that they could understand, until a man was found who had likewise been cast away upon the coast, and who spoke Latin. They remained several days upon the island, which was rich and fruitful, abounding with all kinds of metals, especially gold.* There was a high mountain in the centre, from which flowed four rivers, which watered the whole country. The inhabitants were intelligent and acquainted with the mechanical arts of Europe. They cultivated grain, made beer, and lived in houses built of stone. There were Latin books in the king's library, though the inhabitants had no knowledge of that lan-

* This account is taken from Hackluyt, vol. iii., p. 123. The passage about gold and other metals is not to be found in the original Italian or Ramusio (tom. ii., p. 23), and is probably an interpolation.

guage. They had many cities and castles, and carried on a trade with Greenland for pitch, sulphur, and peltry. Though much given to navigation, they were ignorant of the use of the compass, and finding the Friselanders acquainted with it, held them in great esteem; and the king sent them with twelve barks to visit a country to the south, called Drogeo. They had nearly perished in a storm, but were cast away upon the coast of Drogeo. They found the people to be cannibals, and were on the point of being killed and devoured, but were spared on account of their great skill in fishing.

The fishermen described this Drogeo as being a country of vast extent, or rather a new world; that the inhabitants were naked and barbarous; but that far to the southwest there was a more civilized region, and temperate climate, where the inhabitants had a knowledge of gold and silver, lived in cities, erected splendid temples to idols, and sacrificed human victims to them, which they afterwards devoured.

After the fisherman had resided many years on this continent, during which time he had passed from the service of one chieftain to another, and traversed various parts of it, certain boats of Estotiland arrived on the coast of Drogeo. The fisherman went on board of them, acted as interpreter, and followed the trade between the mainland and Estotiland for some time, until he became very rich. Then he fitted out

a bark of his own, and with the assistance of some of the people of the island, made his way back across the thousand intervening miles of ocean, and arrived safe at Friseland. The account he gave of these countries determined Zichmni, the Prince of Friseland, to send an expedition thither, and Antonio Zeno was to command it. Just before sailing, the fisherman, who was to have acted as guide, died; but certain mariners, who had accompanied him from Estotiland, were taken in his place. The expedition sailed under command of Zichmni; the Venetian, Zeno, merely accompanied it. It was unsuccessful. After having discovered an island called Icaria, where they met with a rough reception from the inhabitants, and were obliged to withdraw, the ships were driven by a storm to Greenland. No record remains of any further prosecution of the enterprise.

The countries mentioned in the account of Zeno were laid down on a map originally engraved on wood. The island of Estotiland had been supposed by M. Malte-Brun to be Newfoundland; its partially civilized inhabitants the descendants of the Scandinavian colonists of Vinland, and the Latin books in the king's library to be the remains of the library of the Greenland bishop, who emigrated thither in 1121. Drogeo, according to the same conjecture, was Nova Scotia and New England. The civilized people to the southwest, who sacrificed human victims in rich temples,

he surmises to have been the Mexicans, or some ancient nation of Florida or Louisiana.

The premises do not appear to warrant this deduction. The whole story abounds with improbabilities, not the least of which is the civilization prevalent among the inhabitants; their houses of stone, their European arts, the library of their king, no traces of which were to be found on their subsequent discovery. Not to mention the information about Mexico penetrating through the numerous savage tribes of a vast continent. It is proper to observe that this account was not published until 1558, long after the discovery of Mexico. It was given to the world by Francisco Marcolini, a descendant of the Zeni, from the fragments of letters said to have been written by Antonio Zeno to Carlo his brother. "It grieves me," says the editor, "that the book, and divers other writings concerning these matters, are miserably lost; for being but a child when they came to my hands, and not knowing what they were, I tore them and rent them in pieces, which now I cannot call to remembrance, but to my exceeding great grief."*

This garbled statement by Marcolini derived considerable authority by being introduced by Abraham Ortelius, an able geographer, in his *Theatrum Orbis;* but the whole story has been condemned by able commentators as a gross fabrication. Mr. Forster resents

* Hackluyt, *Collect*, vol. iii., p. 127.

this, as an instance of obstinate incredulity, saying that it is impossible to doubt the existence of the country of which Carlo, Nicolo, and Antonio Zeno talk, as original acts in the archives of Venice prove that the Chevalier undertook a voyage to the north; that his brother Antonio followed him; that Antonio traced a map, which he brought back and hung up in his house, where it remained subject to public examination until the time of Marcolini as an incontestable proof of the truth of what he advanced. Granting all this, it merely proves that Antonio and his brother were at Friseland and Greenland. Their letters never assert that Zeno made the voyage to Estotiland. The fleet was carried by a tempest to Greenland, after which we hear no more of him; and his account of Estotiland and Drogeo rests simply on the tale of the fisherman, after whose descriptions his map must have been conjecturally projected. The whole story resembles much the fables circulated shortly after the discovery of Columbus, to arrogate to other nations and individuals the credit of the achievement.

M. Malte-Brun intimates that the alleged discovery of Vinland may have been known to Columbus when he made a voyage in the North Sea in 1477,* and that the map of Zeno being in the national library of London in a Danish work, at a time when Bartholomew Columbus was in that city, employed in mak-

* Malte-Brun, *Hist. de Geog.*, tom. i., lib. xvii.

ing maps, he may have known something of it and have communicated it to his brother.* Had M. Malte-Brun examined the history of Columbus with his usual accuracy, he would have perceived that in his correspondence with Paulo Toscanelli in 1474, he had expressed his intention of seeking India by a route directly to the west. His voyage to the north did not take place until three years afterwards. As to the residence of Bartholomew in London, it was not until after Columbus had made his proposition of discovery to Portugal, if not to the courts of other powers. Granting, therefore, that he had subsequently heard the dubious stories of Vinland, and of the fisherman's adventures, as related by Zeno, or at least by Marcolini, they evidently could not have influenced him in his great enterprise. His route had no reference to them but was a direct western course not towards Vinland, and Estotiland, and Drogeo, but in search of Cipango and Cathay, and other countries described by Marco Polo, as lying at the extremity of India.

No. XV.

CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF AFRICA BY THE ANCIENTS.

THE knowledge of the ancients with respect to the Atlantic coast of Africa is considered by modern inves-

* *Idem, Geog. Universelle*, tom. xiv. *Note sur la decouverte de l'Amérique.*

tigators much less extensive than had been imagined; and it is doubted whether they had any practical authority for the belief that Africa was circumnavigable. The alleged voyage of Eudoxus of Cyzicus, from the Red Sea to Gibraltar, though recorded by Pliny, Pomponius Mela, and others, is given entirely on the assertion of Cornelius Nepos, who does not tell from whence he derived his information. Posidonius (cited by Strabo) gives an entirely different account of this voyage and rejects it with contempt.*

The famous voyage of Hanno, the Carthaginian, is supposed to have taken place about a thousand years before the Christian era. The *Periplus Hannonis* remains a brief and obscure record of this expedition and a subject of great comment and controversy. By some it has been pronounced a fictitious work, fabricated among the Greeks, but its authenticity has been ably vindicated. It appears to be satisfactorily proved, however, that the voyage of this navigator has been greatly exaggerated, and that he never circumnavigated the extreme end of Africa. Mons. de Bougainville† traces his route to a promontory which he named the West Horn, supposed to be Cape Palmas, about five or six degrees north of the equinoctial line, whence he proceeded to another promontory, under

* Gosselin, *Recherches sur la Géographie des Anciens*, tom. i., p. 162, etc.

† *Memoirs de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, tom. xxvi.

the same parallel, which he called the South Horn, supposed to be Cape de Tres Puntas. Mons. Gosselin, however, in his *Researches into the Geography of the Ancients*, (tom. i., p. 162, etc.) after a rigid examination of the *Periplus* of Hanno, determines that he had not sailed farther south than Cape Non. Pliny, who makes Hanno range the whole coast of Africa, from the Straits to the confines of Arabia, had never seen his *Periplus*, but took his idea from the works of Xenophon of Lampsaco. The Greeks surcharged the narration of the voyager with all kinds of fables, and on their unfaithful copies, Strabo founded many of his assertions. According to M. Gosselin, the itinerries of Hanno, of Scylax, Polybius, Statius, Sebosus and Juba ; the recitals of Plato, of Aristotle, of Pliny, of Plutarch, and the tables of Ptolemy, all bring us to the same results, and notwithstanding their apparent contradictions, fix the limit of southern navigation about the neighborhood of Cape Non, or Cape Bojador.

The opinion that Africa was a peninsula, which existed among the Persians, the Egyptians, and perhaps the Greeks, several centuries prior to the Christian era, was not, in his opinion, founded upon any known facts ; but merely on conjecture, from considering the immensity and unity of the ocean ; or perhaps on more ancient traditions ; or on ideas produced by the Carthaginian discoveries, beyond the Straits of

Gibraltar, and those of the Egyptians beyond the Gulf of Arabia. He thinks that there was a very remote period, when geography was much more perfect than in the time of the Phœnicians and the Greeks, whose knowledge was but confused traces of what had previously been better known.

The opinion that the Indian Sea joined the ocean was admitted among the Greeks and in the school of Alexandria until the time of Hipparchus. It seemed authorized by the direction which the coast of Africa took after Cape Aromata, always tending westward as far as it has been explored by navigators.

It was supposed that the western coast of Africa rounded off to meet the eastern, and that the whole was bounded by the ocean, much to the northward of the equator. Such was the opinion of Crates who had lived in the time of Alexander; of Aratus, of Cleanthes, of Cleomedes, of Strabo, of Pomponius Mela, or Macrobius, and many others.

Hipparchus proposed a different system, and led the world into an error, which for a long time retarded the maritime communication of Europe and India. He supposed that the seas were separated into distinct basins, and that the eastern shores of Africa made a circuit round the Indian Sea, so as to join those of Asia beyond the mouth of the Ganges. Subsequent discoveries, instead of refuting this error, only placed the junction of the continents at a greater

distance. Marinus of Tyre, and Ptolemy, adopted this opinion in their works, and illustrated it in their maps, which for centuries controlled the general belief of mankind, and perpetuated the idea that Africa extended onward to the south pole, and that it was impossible to arrive by sea at the coast of India. Still there were geographers who leaned to the more ancient idea of a communication between the Indian Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. It had its advocates in Spain and was maintained by Pomponius Mela and by Isidore of Seville. It was believed also by some of the learned in Italy, in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries; and thus was kept alive until it was acted upon so vigorously by Prince Henry of Portugal, and at length triumphantly demonstrated by Vasco de Gama, in his circumnavigation of the Cape of Good Hope.

No. XVI.

OF THE SHIPS OF COLUMBUS.

In remarking on the smallness of the vessels with which Columbus made his first voyage, Dr. Robertson observes, that, "in the fifteenth century the bulk and construction of vessels were accommodated to the short and easy voyages along the coast, which they were accustomed to perform." We have many proofs, how-

ever, that even anterior to the fifteenth century there were large ships employed by the Spaniards, as well as by other nations. In an edict published in Barcelona, in 1354, by Pedro IV., enforcing various regulations for the security of commerce, mention is made of Catalonian merchant-ships of two and three decks, and from 8000 to 12,000 quintals burden.

In 1419, Alonzo of Arragon hired several merchant ships to transport artillery, horses, etc., from Barcelona to Italy, among which were two, each carrying one hundred and twenty horses, which it is computed would require a vessel of at least 600 tons.

In 1463, mention is made of a Venetian ship of 700 tons which arrived at Barcelona from England, laden with wheat.

In 1497, a Castilian vessel arrived there being of 12,000 quintals burden. These arrivals incidentally mentioned among others of similar size, as happening at one port, show that large ships were in use in those days.* Indeed, at the time of fitting out the second expedition of Columbus, there were prepared in the port of Bermeo, a caracca of 1250 tons, and four ships of from 150 to 450 tons burden. Their destination, however, was altered, and they were sent to convoy Muley Boabdil, the last Moorish king of Granada, from the coast of his conquered territory to Africa. †

* Capmany, *Questiones Criticas.* Quest. 6.
† *Archives de Ind. en Sevilla.*

It was not for the want of large vessels in the Spanish ports, therefore, that those of Columbus were of so small a size. He considered them best adapted to voyages of discovery, as they required but little depth of water, and therefore could more easily and safely coast unknown shores, and explore bays and rivers. He had some purposely constructed of a very small size, for this service; such was the caravel which in his third voyage he despatched to look out for an opening to the sea at the upper part of the gulf of Paria, when the water grew too shallow for his vessel of one hundred tons burden.

The most singular circumstance with respect to the ships of Columbus is that they should be open vessels: for it seems difficult to believe that a voyage of such extent and peril should be attempted in barks of so frail a construction. This, however, is expressly mentioned by Peter Martyr in his Decades written at the time; and mention is made occasionally, in the memoirs relative to the voyages written by Columbus and his son, of certain of his vessels being without decks. He sometimes speaks of the same vessel as a ship and a caravel. There has been some discussion of late as to the precise meaning of the term caravel. The Chevalier Bossi, in his dissertations on Columbus, observes that in the Mediterranean, caravel designates the largest class of ships of war among the Mussulmans, and that in Portugal it means a small vessel of

from 120 to 140 tons burden; but Columbus sometimes applies it to a vessel of forty tons.

Du Cange, in his glossary, considers it a word of Italian origin. Bossi thinks it either Turkish or Arabic, and probably introduced into the European languages by the Moors. Mr. Edward Everett, in a note to his Plymouth oration, considers that the true origin of the word is given in *Ferrarii Origines Linguæ Italicæ*, as follows: "Caravela, navigii minoris genus. Lat. Carabus: Græce Karabron."

That the word caravel was intended to signify a vessel of a small size is evident from a naval classification made by King Alonzo in the middle of the thirteenth century. In the first class he enumerates *Naos*, or large ships which go only with sails, some of which have two masts, and others but one. In the second class smaller vessels as Carracas, Fustas, Ballenares, Pinazas, *Carabelas*, etc. In the third class vessels with sails and oars as Galleys, Galeots, Tardantes, and Saetias.*

Bossi gives a copy of a letter written by Columbus to Don Raphael Xansis, treasurer of the King of Spain, an edition of which exists in the public library at Milan. With this letter he gives several wood-cuts of sketches made with a pen, which accompanied this letter, and which he supposes to have been from the hand of Columbus. In these are represented vessels

* Capmany, *Quest. Crit.*

which are probably caravels. They have high bows and sterns, with castles on the latter. They have short masts with large square sails. One of them, besides sails, has benches of oars, and is probably intended to represent a galley. They are all evidently vessels of small size and light construction.

In a work called *Recherches sur le Commerce*, published in Amsterdam, 1779, is a plate representing a vessel of the latter part of the fifteenth century. It is taken from a picture in the church of St. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice. The vessel bears much resemblance to those said to have been sketched by Columbus; it has two masts, one of which is extremely small with a lateen sail. The mainmast has a large square sail. The vessel has a high poop and bow, is decked at each end, and is open in the centre.

It appears to be the fact, therefore, that most of the vessels with which Columbus undertook his long and perilous voyages were of this light and frail construction, and little superior to the small craft which ply on rivers and along coasts in modern days.

No. XVII.

ROUTE OF COLUMBUS IN HIS FIRST VOYAGE.*

It has hitherto been supposed that one of the Bahama Islands, at present bearing the name of San Salvador, and which is also known as Cat Island, was the first point where Columbus came in contact with the New World. Navarrete, however, in his introduction to the *Collection of Spanish Voyages and Discoveries*, recently published at Madrid, has endeavored to show that it must have been Turk's Island, one of the same group, situated about one hundred leagues (of 20 to the degree) S. E. of San Salvador. Great care has been taken to examine candidly the opinion of Navarrete, comparing it with the journal of Columbus, as published in the above-mentioned work, and with the personal observations of the writer of this article, who has been much among these islands.

Columbus describes Guanahani, on which he landed, and to which he gave the name of San Salvador, as being a beautiful island and very large; as being level and covered with forests, many of the trees of which bore fruit; as having abundance of fresh water, and a large lake in the centre; that it was inhabited by a

* The author of this work is indebted for this able examination of the route of Columbus to an officer of the navy of the United States, whose name he regrets the not being at liberty to mention. He has been greatly benefited in various parts of this history by nautical information from the same intelligent source.

numerous population ; that he proceeded for a considerable distance in his boats along the shore which trended to the N. N. E. and as he passed was visited by the inhabitants of several villages. Turk's Island does not answer to this description.

Turk's Island is a low key composed of sand and rocks, and lying north and south, less than two leagues in extent. It is utterly destitute of wood, and has not a single tree of native growth. It has no fresh water, the inhabitants depending entirely on cisterns and casks in which they preserve the rain ; neither has it any lake, but several salt ponds, which furnish the sole production of the island. Turk's Island cannot be approached on the east or northeast side, in consequence of the reef that surrounds it. It has no harbor, but has an open road on the west side, which vessels at anchor there have to leave and put to sea whenever the wind comes from any other quarter than that of the usual trade breeze of N. E. which blows over the island ; for the shore is so bold that there is no anchorage except close to it ; and when the wind ceases to blow from the land, vessels remaining at their anchors would be swung against the rocks, or forced high upon the shore, by the terrible surf that then prevails. The unfrequented road of the Hawk's Nest, at the south end of the island, is even more dangerous. This island, which is not susceptible of the slightest cultivation, furnishes a scanty subsistence to a few

sheep and horses. The inhabitants draw all their consumption from abroad, with the exception of fish and turtle, which are taken in abundance, and supply the principal food of the slaves employed in the salt-works. The whole wealth of the island consists in the produce of the salt-ponds, and in the salvage and plunder of the many wrecks which take place in the neighborhood. Turk's Island therefore would never be inhabited in a savage state of society, where commerce does not exist, and where men are obliged to draw their subsistence from the spot which they people.

Again: when about to leave Guanahani, Columbus was at a loss to choose which to visit of a great number of islands in sight. Now there is no land visible from Turk's Island, excepting the two salt keys which lie south of it, and with it form the group known as Turk's Islands. The journal of Columbus does not tell us what course he steered in going from Guanahani to Concepcion, but he states that it was five leagues distant from the former, and that the current was against him in sailing to it; whereas the distance from Turk's Island to the Gran Caico, supposed by Navarrete to be the Concepcion of Columbus, is nearly double, and the current sets constantly to the W. N. W. among these islands, which would be favorable in going from Turk's Island to the Caicos.

From Concepcion Columbus went next to an island which he saw nine leagues off in a westerly direction,

to which he gave the name of Fernandina. This Navarrete takes to be Little Inagua, distant no less than twenty-two leagues from Gran Caico. Besides, in going to Little Inagua, it would be necessary to pass quite close to three islands, each larger than Turk's Island, none of which are mentioned in the journal. Columbus describes Fernandina as stretching twenty-eight leagues S. E. and N. W.; whereas Little Inagua has its greatest length of four leagues in a S. W. direction. In a word, the description of Fernandina has nothing in common with Little Inagua. From Fernandina Columbus sailed S. E. to Isabella, which Navarrete takes to be Great Inagua; whereas this latter bears S. W. from Little Inagua, a course differing 90° from the one followed by Columbus. Again: Columbus, on the 20th of November, takes occasion to say that Guanahani was distant eight leagues from Isabella; whereas Turk's Island is thirty-five leagues from Great Inagua.

Leaving Isabella, Columbus stood W. S. W. for the island of Cuba, and fell in with the Islas Arenas. This course drawn from Great Inagua, would meet the coast of Cuba about Port Nipe; whereas Navarrete supposes that Columbus next fell in with the keys south of the Jumentos, and which bear W. N. W. from Inagua: a course differing 45° from the one steered by the ships. After sailing for some time in the neighborhood of Cuba, Columbus finds himself, on

the 14th of November, in the sea of Nuestra Señora, surrounded by so many islands that it was impossible to count them; whereas, on the same day, Navarrete places him off Cape Moa, where there is but one small island, and more than fifty leagues distant from any group that can possibly answer the description.

Columbus informs us that San Salvador was distant from Port Principe forty-five leagues; whereas Turk's Island is distant from the point supposed by Navarrete to be the same, eighty leagues.

On taking leave of Cuba, Columbus remarks that he had followed its coast for an extent of one hundred and twenty leagues. Deducting twenty leagues for his having followed its windings, there still remain one hundred. Now, Navarrete only supposes him to have coasted this island an extent of seventy leagues.

Such are the most important difficulties which the theory of Navarrete offers, and which appear insurmountable. Let us now take up the route of Columbus as recorded in his journal, and, with the best charts before us, examine how it agrees with the popular and traditional opinion, that he first landed on the island of San Salvador.

We learn from the journal of Columbus that, on the 11th of October, 1492, he continued steering W. S. W. until sunset, when he returned to his old course of west, the vessels running at the rate of three leagues an hour. At ten o'clock he and several of his crew

saw a light, which seemed like a torch carried about on land. He continued running on four hours longer, and had made a distance of twelve leagues farther west, when at two in the morning, land was discovered ahead, distant two leagues. The twelve leagues which they ran since ten o'clock, with the two leagues' distance from the land, form a total corresponding essentially with the distance and situation of Watling's Island from San Salvador; and it is then presumed, that the light seen at that hour was on Watling's Island, which they were then passing. Had the light been seen on land ahead, and they had kept running on four hours, at the rate of three leagues an hour, they must have run high and dry on shore. As the Admiral himself received the royal reward for having seen this light, as the first discovery of land, Watling's Island is believed to be the point for which this premium was granted.

On making land, the vessels were hove-to until daylight of the same 12th of October; they then anchored off an island of great beauty, covered with forests, and extremely populous.

It was called Guanahani by the natives, but Columbus gave it the name of San Salvador. Exploring its coast, where it ran to the N. N. E., he found a harbor capable of sheltering any number of ships. This description corresponds minutely with the S. E. part of the island known as San Salvador, or Cat Island, which

lies east and west, bending at its eastern extremity to the N. N. E., and has the same verdant and fertile appearance. The vessels had probably drifted into this bay at the S. E. side of San Salvador, on the morning of the 12th, while lying to for daylight; nor did Columbus, while remaining at the island, or when sailing from it, open the land so as to discover that what he had taken for its whole length was but a bend at one end of it, and that the main body of the island lay behind, stretching far to the N. W. From Guanahani, Columbus saw so many other islands that he was at a loss which next to visit. The Indians signified that they were innumerable, and mentioned the names of above a hundred. He determined to go to the largest in sight, which appeared to be about five leagues distant; some of the others were nearer, and some farther off. The island thus selected, it is presumed, was the present island of Concepcion; and that the others were that singular belt of small islands, known as La Cadena (or the chain), stretching past the island of San Salvador in a S. E. and N. W. direction: the nearest of the group being nearer than Concepcion, while the rest are more distant.

Leaving San Salvador in the afternoon of the 14th for the island thus selected, the ships lay by during the night, and did not reach it until late in the following day, being retarded by adverse currents. Columbus gave this island the name of Santa Maria de la

Concepcion: he does not mention either its bearings from San Salvador, or the course which he steered in going to it. We know that in all this neighborhood the current sets strongly and constantly to the W. N. W.; and since Columbus had the currents against him, he must have been sailing in an opposite direction, or to the E. S. E. Besides, when near Concepcion, Columbus sees another island to the westward, the largest he had yet seen; but he tells us that he anchored off Concepcion, and did not stand for this larger island, because he could not have sailed to the west. Hence it is rendered certain that Columbus did not sail westward in going from San Salvador to Concepcion; for, from the opposition of the wind, as there could be no other cause, he could not sail towards that quarter. Now, on reference to the chart, we find the island at present known as Concepcion situated E. S. E. from San Salvador, and at a corresponding distance of five leagues.

Leaving Concepcion on the 16th of October, Columbus steered for a very large island seen to the westward nine leagues off, and which extended itself twenty-eight leagues in a S. E. and N. W. direction. He was becalmed the whole day, and did not reach the island until the following morning, 17th of October. He named it Fernandina. At noon he made sail again, with a view to run around it, and reach another island called Samoet; but the wind being at S. E. by S., the

course he wished to steer, the natives signified that it would be easier to sail round this island by running to the N. W. with a fair wind. He therefore bore up to the N. W., and having run two leagues found a marvellous port, with a narrow entrance, or rather with two entrances, for there was an island which shut it in completely, forming a noble basin within. Sailing out of this harbor by the opposite entrance at the N. W., he discovered that part of the island which runs east and west. The natives signified to him that this island was smaller than Samoet, and that it would be better to return towards the latter. It had now become calm, but shortly after there sprung up a breeze from W. N. W., which was ahead for the course they had been steering, so they bore up and stood to the E. S. E. in order to get an offing; for the weather threatened a storm, which however dissipated itself in rain. The next day, being the 18th of October, they anchored opposite the extremity of Fernandina.

The whole of this description answers most accurately to the island of Exuma, which lies south from San Salvador, and S. W. by S. from Concepcion. The only inconsistency is, that Columbus states that Fernandina bore nearly west from Concepcion, and was twenty-eight leagues in extent. This mistake must have proceeded from his having taken the long chain of keys called La Cadena for part of the same Exuma; which continuous appearance they naturally assume

when seen from Concepcion, for they run in the same S. E. and N. W. direction. Their bearings, when seen from the same point, are likewise westerly as well as southwesterly. As a proof that such was the case, it may be observed, that, after having approached these islands, instead of the extent of Fernandina being increased to his eye, he now remarks that it was twenty leagues long, whereas it was before estimated by him at twenty-eight; he now discovers that instead of one island there were many, and alters his course southerly to reach the one that was most conspicuous.

The identity of the island here described with Exuma is irresistibly forced upon the mind. The distance from Concepcion, the remarkable port with an island in front of it, and farther on its coast turning off to the westward, are all so accurately delineated, that it would seem as though the chart had been drawn from the description of Columbus.

On the 19th of October, the ships left Fernandina, steering S. E. with the wind at north. Sailing three hours on this course, they discovered Samoet to the east, and steered for it, arriving at its north point before noon. Here they found a little island surrounded by rocks, with another reef of rocks lying between it and Samoet. To Samoet Columbus gave the name of Isabella, and to the point of it opposite the little island, that of Cabo del Isleo; the cape at the S. W. point of Samoet Columbus called Cabo de Laguna, and off this

last his ships were brought to anchor. The little island lay in the direction from Fernandina to Isabella, east and west. The coast from the small island lay westerly twelve leagues to a cape, which Columbus called Fermosa from its beauty ; this he believed to be an island apart from Samoet or Isabella, with another one between them. Leaving Cabo Laguna, where he remained until the 20th of October, Columbus steered to the N. E. towards Cabo del Isleo, but meeting with shoals inside of the small island, he did not come to anchor till the day following. Near this extremity of Isabella they found a lake, from which the ships were supplied with water.

This island of Isabella or Samoet agrees so accurately in its description with Isla Larga, which lies east of Exuma, that it is only necessary to read it with the chart unfolded to become convinced of the identity.

Having resolved to visit the islands which the natives called Cuba, and described as bearing W. S. W. from Isabella, Columbus left Cabo del Isleo at midnight, the commencement of the 24th October, and shaped his course accordingly to the W. S. W. The wind continued light, with rain, until noon, when it freshened up, and in the evening Cape Verde, the S. W. point of Fernandina, bore N. W. distant seven leagues. As the night became tempestuous, he lay to until morning, drifting according to the reckoning two leagues.

On the morning of the 25th he again made sail to W. S. W., until nine o'clock, when he had run five leagues; he then steered west until three, when he had run eleven leagues, at which hour land was discovered, consisting of seven or eight keys lying north and south, and distant five leagues from the ships. Here he anchored the next day, south of these islands, which he called Islas de Arena; they were low, and five or six leagues in extent.

The distances run by Columbus, added to the departure taken from Fernandina and the distance from these islands of Arena at the time of discovering, give a sum of thirty leagues. This sum of thirty leagues is about three times less than the distance from the S. W. point of Fernandina or Exuma, whence Columbus took his departure, to the group of Mucaras, which lie east of Cayo Lobo on the grand bank of Bahama, and which correspond to the description of Columbus. If it were necessary to account for the difference of three leagues in a reckoning, where so much is given on conjecture, it would readily occur to a seaman, that an allowance of two leagues for drift, during a long night of blowy weather, is but a small one. The course from Exuma to the Mucaras is about S. W. by W. The course followed by Columbus differs a little from this, but as it was his intention on setting sail from Isabella to steer W. S. W., and since he afterwards altered it to west, we may conclude that he did so in consequence of

having been run out of his course to the southward, while lying to the night previous.

Oct. 27.—At sunrise Columbus set sail from the Isles Arenas or Mucaras, for an island called Cuba, steering S. S. W. At dark, having made seventeen leagues on that course, he saw the land and hove his ships to until morning. On the 28th he made sail again at S. S. W., and entered a beautiful river with a fine harbor, which he named San Salvador. The journal in this part does not describe the localities with the minuteness with which everything has hitherto been noted; the text also is in several places obscure.

This port of San Salvador we take to be the one now known as Caravelas Grandes, situated eight leagues west of Nuevitas del Principe. Its bearings and distance from the Mucaras coincide exactly with those run by Columbus; and its description agrees, as far as can be ascertained by charts, with the port which he visited.

Oct. 29.—Leaving this port Columbus stood to the west, and having sailed six leagues he came to a point of the island running N. W., which we take to be the Punta Gorda; and, ten leagues farther another stretching easterly, which will be Punta Curiana. One league farther he discovered a small river, and beyond this another very large one, to which he gave the name of Rio de Mares. This river emptied into a fine basin resembling a lake and having a bold entrance. It

had for landmarks two round mountains at the S. W. and to the W. N. W. a bold promontory suitable for a fortification, which projected far into the sea. This we take to be the fine harbor and river situated west of Point Curiana; its distance corresponds with that run by Columbus from Caravelas Grandes, which we have supposed identical with Port San Salvador. Leaving Rio de Mares the 30th of October, Columbus stood to the N. W. for fifteen leagues when he saw a cape, to which he gave the name of Cabo de Palmas. This, we believe, is one which forms the eastern entrance to Laguna de Moron. Beyond this cape was a river, distant, according to the natives, four day's journey from the town of Cuba; Columbus determined therefore to make for it.

Having lain to all night he reached the river on the 31st of October, but found that it was too shallow to admit his ships. This is supposed to be what is now known as Laguna de Moron. Beyond this was a cape surrounded by shoals, and another projected still farther out. Between these two capes was a bay capable of receiving small vessels. The identity here of the description with the coast near Laguna de Moron seems very clear. The cape east of Laguna de Moron coincides with Cape Palmas, the Laguna de Moron with the shoal river described by Columbus; and in the western point of entrance with the island

of Cabrian opposite it we recognize the two projecting capes he speaks of, with what appeared to be a bay between them. This all is a remarkable combination difficult to be found anywhere but in the same spot which Columbus visited and described. Further, the coast from the port of San Salvador had run west to Rio de Mares, a distance of seventeen leagues, and from Rio de Mares it had extended N. W. fifteen leagues to Cabo de Palmas; all of which agrees fully with what has been here supposed. The wind having shifted to north, which was contrary to the course they had been steering, the vessels bore up and returned to Rio de Mares.

On the 12th of November the ships sailed out of Rio de Mares to go in quest of Babeque, an island believed to abound in gold, and to lie E. by S. from that port. Having sailed eight leagues with a fair wind they came to a river in which may be recognized the one which lies just west of Punta Gorda. Four leagues farther they saw another, which they called Rio del Sol. It appeared very large but they did not stop to examine it as the wind was fair to advance. This we take to be the river now known as Sabana. Columbus was now retracing his steps and had made twelve leagues from Rio de Mares, but in going west from Port San Salvador to Rio de Mares, he had run seventeen leagues. San Salvador, therefore, remains five

leagues east of Rio del Sol; and, accordingly, on reference to the chart, we find Caravelas Grandes situated a corresponding distance from Sabana.

Having run six leagues from Rio del Sol, which makes in all eighteen leagues from Rio de Mares, Columbus came to a cape which he called Cabo de Cuba, probably from supposing it to be the extremity of that island. This corresponds precisely in distance from Punta Curiana with the lesser island of Guajava, situated near Cuba, and between which and the greater Guajava Columbus must have passed in running in for Port San Salvador. Either he did not notice it, from his attention being engrossed by the magnificent island before him, or, as is also possible, his vessels may have been drifted through the passage, which is two leagues wide, while lying to the night previous to their arrival at Port San Salvador.

On the 13th of November, having hove to all night, in the morning the ships passed a point two leagues in extent, and then entered into a gulf that made into the S. S. W., and which Columbus thought separated Cuba from Bohio. At the bottom of the gulf was a large basin between two mountains. He could not determine whether or not this was an arm of the sea; for not finding shelter from the north wind he put to sea again. Hence it would appear that Columbus must have partly sailed round the smaller Guajava, which he took to be the extremity of Cuba, without

being aware that a few hours' sail would have taken him by this channel to Port San Salvador, his first discovery in Cuba, and so back to the same Rio del Sol, which he had passed the day previous. Of the two mountains seen on both sides of this entrance, the principal one corresponds with the peak called Alto de Juan Duane, which lies seven leagues west of Punta de Maternillos. The wind continuing north, he stood east fourteen leagues from Cape Cuba, which we have supposed the lesser island of Guajava. It is here rendered sure that the point of little Guajava was believed by him to be the extremity of Cuba ; for he speaks of the land mentioned as lying to leeward of the above-mentioned gulf as being the island of Bohio, and says that he discovered twenty leagues of it running E. S. E. and W. N. W.

On the 14th of November, having lain to all night with a N. E. wind, he determined to seek a port, and if he found none to return to those which he had left in the island of Cuba ; for it will be remembered that all east of little Guajava he supposed to be Bohio. He steered E. by S. therefore six leagues, and then stood in for the land. Here he saw many ports and islands: but as it blew fresh with a heavy sea he dared not enter, but ran the coast down N. W. by W. for a distance of eighteen leagues, where he saw a clear entrance and a port, in which he stood S. S. W. and afterwards S. E., the navigation being all clear and open. Here Colum-

bus beheld so many islands that it was impossible to count them. They were very lofty and covered with trees. Columbus called the neighboring sea Mar de Nuestra Señora, and to the harbor near the entrance to these islands he gave the name of Puerto del Principe. This harbor he says he did not enter until the Sunday following, which was four days after. This part of the text of Columbus' journal is confused, and there are also anticipations as if it had been written subsequently, or mixed together in copying. It appears evident that while lying to the night previous, with the wind at N. E., the ships had drifted to the N. W., and been carried by the powerful current of the Bahama channel far in the same direction. When they bore up therefore to return to the port which they had left in the island of Cuba, they fell in to leeward of them, and now first discovered the numerous group of islands of which Cayo Romano is the principal. The current of this channel is of itself sufficient to have carried the vessel to the westward a distance of twenty leagues, which is what they had run easterly since leaving Cape Cuba, or Guajava, for it had acted upon them during a period of thirty hours. There can be no doubt as to the identity of these keys with those about Cayo Romano; for they are the only ones in the neighborhood of Cuba that are not of a low and swampy nature, but large and lofty. They inclose a free, open navigation and abundance of fine

harbors, in late years the resort of pirates, who found security and concealment for themselves and their prizes in the recesses of these lofty keys. From the description of Columbus, the vessels must have entered between the islands of Baril and Pacedon, and sailing along Cayo Romano on a S. E. course, have reached in another day their old cruising ground in the neighborhood of lesser Guajava. Not only Columbus does not tell us here of his having changed his anchorage amongst these keys, but his journal does not even mention his having anchored at all, until the return from the ineffectual search after Babeque. It is clear from what has been said that it was not in Port Principe that the vessels anchored on this occasion; but it could not have been very distant, since Columbus went from the ships in his boats on the 18th of November to place a cross at its entrance. He had probably seen the entrance from without when sailing east from Guajava on the 13th of November. The identity of this port with one now known as Neuvitas el Principe seems certain from the description of its entrance. Columbus, it appears, did not visit its interior.

On the 19th of November the ships sailed again in quest of Babeque. At sunset Port Principe bore S. S. W., distant seven leagues, and having sailed all night at N. E. by N., and until ten o'clock the next day (20th of November), they had run a distance of fifteen leagues on that coast. The wind blowing from E. S.

E., which was the direction in which Babeque was supposed to lie, and the weather being foul, Columbus determined to return to Port Principe, which was then distant twenty-five leagues. He did not wish to go to Isabella, distant only twelve leagues, lest the Indians whom he had brought from San Salvador, which lay eight leagues from Isabella, should make their escape. Thus, in sailing N. E. by N. from near Port Principe Columbus had approached within a short distance of Isabella. That island was then, according to his calculations, thirty-seven leagues from Port Principe; and San Salvador was forty-five leagues from the same point. The first differs but eight leagues from the truth, the latter nine; or from the actual distance of Neuvitas el Principe from Isla Larga and San Salvador. Again, let us now call to mind the course made by Columbus in going from Isabella to Cuba; it was first W. S. W., then W., and afterwards S. S. W. Having consideration for the different distances run on each, these yield a medium course not materially different from S. W. Sailing then S. W. from Isabella, Columbus had reached Port San Salvador on the coast of Cuba. Making afterwards a course of N. E. from off Port Principe, he was going in the direction of Isabella. Hence we deduce that Port San Salvador, on the coast of Cuba, lay west of Port Principe, and the whole combination is thus bound together and established. The two islands seen by

Columbus at ten o'clock of the same 20th of November, must have been some of the keys that lie west of the Jumentos. Running back towards Port Principe, Columbus made it at dark, but found that he had been carried to the westward by the currents. This furnishes a sufficient proof of the strength of the current in the Bahama channel; for it will be remembered that he ran over to Cuba with a fair wind. After contending for four days, until the 24th of November, with light winds against the force of these currents, he arrived at length opposite the level island whence he had set out the week before when going to Babeque.

We are thus accidentally informed that the point from which Columbus started in search of Babeque was the same island of Guajava the lesser, which lies west of Neuvitas el Principe. Further: at first he dared not enter into the opening between the two mountains, for it seemed as though the sea broke upon them; but having sent the boat ahead, the vessels, followed in at S. W. and then W. into a fine harbor. The level island lay north of it, and with another island formed a secure basin capable of sheltering all the navy of Spain. This level island resolves itself then into our late Cape Cuba, which we have supposed to be little Guajava, and the entrance east of it becomes identical with the gulf above mentioned which lay between two mountains, one of which we have supposed the Alto de Juan Daune, and which gulf appeared to

divide Cuba from Bohio. Our course now becomes a plain one. On the 26th of November, Columbus sailed from Santa-Catalina (the name given by him to the port last described) at sunrise, and stood for the cape at the S. E. which he called Cabo de Pico. In this it is easy to recognize the high peak already spoken of as the Alto de Juan Daune. Arrived off this he saw another cape, distant fifteen leagues, and still farther another five leagues beyond it, which he called Cabo de Campana. The first must be that now known as Point Padre, the second Point Mulas: their distances from Alto de Juan Daune are underrated; but it requires no little experience to estimate correctly the distances of the bold headlands of Cuba, as seen through the pure atmosphere that surrounds the island.

Having passed Point Mulas in the night, on the 27th, Columbus looked into the deep bay that lies S. E. of it, and seeing the bold projecting headland that makes out between Port Nipe and Port Banes, with those deep bays on each side of it, he supposed it to be an arm of the sea dividing one land from another with an island between them.

Having landed at Taco for a short time, Columbus arrived in the evening of the 27th at Baracoa, to which he gave the name of Puerto Santo. From Cabo del Pico to Puerto Santo, a distance of sixty leagues, he had passed no fewer than nine good ports and five

rivers to Cape Campana, and thence to Puerto Santo eight more rivers, each with a good port; all of which may be found on the chart between Alto de Juan Daune and Baracoa. By keeping near the coast he had been assisted to the S. E. by the eddy current of the Bahama channel. Sailing from Puerto Santo on Baracoa on the 4th of December, he reached the extremity of Cuba the following day, and striking off upon a wind to the S. E. in search of Babeque, which lay to the N. E., he came in sight of Bohio, to which he gave the name of Hispaniola.

On taking leave of Cuba, Columbus tells us that he had coasted it a distance of 120 leagues. Allowing twenty leagues of this distance for his having followed the undulations of the coast, the remaining 100 measured from Point Maysi fall exactly upon Cabrion Key, which we have supposed the western boundary of his discoveries.

The astronomical observations of Columbus form no objection to what has been here advanced; for he tells us that the instrument which he made use of to measure the meridian altitudes of the heavenly bodies was out of order and not to be depended upon. He places his first discovery, Guanahani, in the latitude of Ferro, which is about 27° 30′ north. San Salvador we find in 24° 30′, and Turk's Island in 21° 30′; both are very wide of the truth, but it is certainly easier to conceive an error of three than one of six degrees.

Laying aside geographical demonstrations, let us now examine how historical records agree with the opinion here supported, that the island of San Salvador was the first point where Columbus came in contact with the New World. Herrera, who is considered the most faithful and authentic of Spanish historians, wrote his *History of the Indies* towards the year 1600. In describing the voyage of Juan Ponce de Leon, made to Florida in 1512, he makes the following remarks*: "Leaving Aguada in Porto Rico, he steered to the N. W. by N., and in five days arrived at an island called El Viejo, in latitude 22° 30′ north. The next day they arrived at a small island of the Lucayos, called Caycos. On the eighth day they anchored at another island called Yaguna in 24°, on the eighth day out from Porto Rico. Thence they passed to the island of Manuega, in 24° 30′ and on the eleventh day they reached Guanahani, which is in 25° 40′ north. This island of Guanahani was the first discovered by Columbus on his first voyage and which he called San Salvador." This is the substance of the remarks of Herrera, and is entirely conclusive as to the location of San Salvador. The latitudes, it is true, are all placed higher than we now know them to be; that San Salvador being such as to correspond with no other land than that now known as the Berry Islands, which are seventy leagues distant from the nearest coast of

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. i., lib. ix., cap. 10.

Cuba; whereas Columbus tells us that San Salvador was only forty-five leagues from Port Principe. But in these infant days of navigation, the instruments for measuring the altitudes of the heavenly bodies, and the tables of declinations for deducing the latitude, must have been so imperfect as to place the most scientific navigator of the time below the most mechanical one of the present.

The second island arrived at by Ponce de Leon, in his northwestern course, was one of the Caycos. The first one, then, called El Viejo, must have been Turk's Island, which lies S. E. of the Caycos. The third island they came to was probably Mariguana; the fourth, Crooked Island; and the fifth, Isla Larga. Lastly they came to Guanahani, the San Salvador of Columbus. If this be supposed identical with Turk's Island, where do we find the succession of islands touched at by Ponce de Leon on his way from Porto Rico to San Salvador? * No stress has been laid, in these remarks, on the identity of name which has been preserved to San Salvador, Concepcion, and Port Principe, with those given by Columbus, though traditional usage is of vast weight in such matters. Geographical proof, of a conclusive kind it is thought, has been advanced

* In the first chapter of Herrera's description of the Indies, appended to his *History*, is another scale of the Bahama Islands, which corroborates the above. It begins at the opposite end, at the N. W., and runs down to the S. E. It is thought unnecessary to cite it particularly.

to enable the world to remain in its old hereditary belief that the present island of San Salvador is the spot where Columbus first set foot upon the New World. Established opinions of the kind should not be lightly molested. It is a good old rule that ought to be kept in mind in curious research as well as territorial dealings, "Do not disturb the ancient landmarks."

NOTE TO THE REVISED EDITION OF 1848.—The Baron de Humboldt, in his *Examen Critique de l'Histoire de la Geographie du Nouveau Continent*, published in 1837, speaks repeatedly in high terms of the ability displayed in the above examination of the route of Columbus, and argues at great length and quite conclusively in support of the opinion contained in it. Above all, he produces a document hitherto unknown, and the great importance of which had been discovered by M. Valeknaer and himself in 1832. This is a map made in 1500 by that able mariner, Juan de la Cosa, who accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, and sailed with other of the discoverers. In this map, of which the Baron de Humboldt gives an engraving, the islands as laid down agree completely with the bearings and distances given in the journal of Columbus, and establishes the identity of San Salvador, or Cat Island, and Guanahani.

"I feel happy," says M. de Humboldt, "to be enabled to destroy the incertitudes (which rested on this subject) by a document as ancient as it is unknown; a document which confirms irrevocably the arguments which Mr. Washington Irving has given in his work against the hypothesis of the Turk's Island."

In the present revised edition the author feels at liberty to give the merit of the very masterly paper on the route of Columbus, where it is justly due. It was furnished him at Madrid by the late commander Alexander Slidell Mackenzie, of the United States Navy, whose modesty shrunk from affixing his name to an article so calculated to do him credit, and which has since challenged the high eulogiums of men of nautical science.

No. XVIII.

PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THE SUMS MENTIONED IN THIS WORK HAVE BEEN REDUCED INTO MODERN CURRENCY.

In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the mark of silver, which was equal to 8 ounces, or to 50 *castillanos*, was divided into 65 *reals*, and each *real* into 34 *maravedis*; so that there were 2210 *maravedis*, in the mark of silver. Among other silver coins, there was the *real* of 8, which consisting of 8 *reals*, was, within a small fraction, the eighth part of a mark of silver, or one ounce. Of the gold coins then in circulation, the *castillano*, or *dobla de la vanda*, was worth 490 *maravedis*, and the *ducado* 383 *maravedis*.

If the value of the *maravedi* had remained unchanged in Spain down to the present day, it would be easy to reduce a sum of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella into a correspondent sum of current money, but by the successive depreciation of the coin of Vellon, or mixed metals, issued since that period, the *real* and *maravedi* of Vellon, which had replaced the ancient currency, were reduced towards the year 1700 to about a third of the old *real* and *maravedi*, now known as the *real* and *maravedi* of silver. As, however, the ancient piece of eight *reals* was equal approximately to the ounce of silver, and the *duro*, or dollar of the present day, is likewise equal to an

ounce, they may be considered identical. Indeed, in Spanish America, the dollar, instead of being divided into twenty *reals*, as in Spain, is divided into only eight parts called *reals*, which evidently represent the *real* of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, as the dollar does the *real* of eight. But the ounce of silver was anciently worth 276¼ *maravedis;* the dollar therefore is likewise equal to 276¼ *maravedis.* By converting then the sums mentioned in this work into *maravedis*, they have been afterwards reduced into dollars by dividing by 276¼.

There is still, however, another calculation to be made before we can arrive at the actual value of any sum of gold and silver mentioned in former times. It is necessary to notice the variation which has taken place in the value of the metals themselves. In Europe, previous to the discovery of the New World, an ounce of gold commanded an amount of food or labor which would cost three ounces at the present day; hence an ounce of gold was then estimated at three times its present value. At the same time an ounce of silver commanded an amount which at present costs four ounces of silver. It appears from this that the value of gold and silver varied with respect to each other, as well as with respect to all other commodities. This is owing to there having been much more silver brought from the New World, with respect to the quantity previously in circulation, than

there has been of gold. In the fifteenth century one ounce of gold was equal to about twelve of silver, and now, in the year 1827, it is exchanged against sixteen.

Hence, giving an idea of the relative value of the sums mentioned in this work, it has been found necessary to multiply them by three when in gold, and by four when expressed in silver.*

It is expedient to add that the dollar is reckoned in this work at one hundred cents of the United States of North America, and four shillings and sixpence of England.

No. XIX.

PRESTER JOHN.

SAID to be derived from the Persian *Prestegani* or *Prestigani*, which signifies apostolique ; or *Preschtak-Geham*, angel of the world. It is the name of a potent Christian monarch of shadowy renown, whose dominions were placed by writers of the Middle Ages sometimes in the remote parts of Asia and sometimes in Africa, and of whom such contradictory accounts were given by the travellers of those days that the very existence either of him or his kingdoms came to be con-

* See Caballero, *Pesos y Medidas*. J. B. Say, *Economie Politique*.

sidered doubtful. It now appears to be admitted, that there really was such a potentate in the remote part of Asia. He was of the Nestorian Christians, a sect spread throughout Asia, and taking its name and origin from Nestorius, a Christian patriarch of Constantinople.

The first vague reports of a Christian potentate in the interior of Asia, or as it was then called India, were brought to Europe by the Crusaders, who it is supposed gathered them from the Syrian merchants who traded to the very confines of China.

In subsequent ages, when the Portuguese in their travels and voyages discovered a Christian king among the Abyssinians, called Baleel-Gian, they confounded him with the potentate already spoken of. Nor was the blunder extraordinary, since the original Prester John was said to reign over a remote part of India, and the ancients included in that name Ethiopia and all the region of Africa and Asia bordering on the Red Sea and on the commercial route from Egypt to India.

Of the Prester John of India, we have reports furnished by William Ruysbrook, commonly called Rubruquis, a Franciscan friar sent by Louis IX. about the middle of the thirteenth century to convert the Grand Khan. According to him, Prester John was originally a Nestorian priest, who on the death of the sovereign made himself king of the Naymans, all Nestorian

Christians. Capini, a Franciscan friar, sent by Pope Innocent in 1245 to convert the Mongols of Persia, says, that Ocoday, one of the sons of Ghengis Khan of Tartary, marched with an army against the Christians of Grand India. The king of that country, who was called Prester John, came to their succor. Having had figures of men made of bronze, he had them fastened on the saddles of horses and put fire within, with a man behind with a bellows. When they came to battle these horses were put in the advance, and the men who were seated behind the figures threw something into the fire, and blowing with their bellows, made such a smoke that the Tartars were quite covered with it. They then fell on them, despatched many with their arrows and put the rest to flight.

Marco Polo (1271) places Prester John near the great wall of China, to the north of Chan-si, in Teudich, a populous region full of cities and castles.

Mandeville (1332) makes Prester sovereign of Upper India (Asia), with four thousand islands tributary to him.

When John II., of Portugal, was pushing his discoveries along the African coast, he was informed that three hundred and fifty leagues to the east of the kingdom of Benin in the profound depths of Africa, there was a puissant monarch, called Ogave, who had spiritual and temporal jurisdiction over all the surrounding kings.

An African prince assured him, also, that to the east of Timbuctoo there was a sovereign who professed a religion similar to that of the Christians, and was king of a Mosaic people.

King John now supposed that he had found traces of the real Prester John, with whom he was eager to form an alliance religious as well as commercial. In 1487 he sent envoys by land in quest of him. One was a gentleman of his household, Pedro de Covilham; the other, Alphonso de Paiva. They went by Naples to Rhodes, thence to Cairo, thence to Aden on the Arabian Gulf above the mouth of the Red Sea.

Here they separated with an agreement to rendezvous at Cairo. Alphonso de Paiva sailed direct for Ethiopia; Pedro de Covilham for the Indies. The latter passed to Calicut and Goa, where he embarked for Sofala on the eastern coast of Africa, thence returned to Aden, and made his way back to Cairo. Here he learned that his coadjutor, Alphonso de Paiva, had died in that city. He found two Portuguese Jews waiting for him with fresh orders from King John not to give up his researches after Prester John until he found him. One of the Jews he sent back with a journal and verbal accounts of his travels. With the other he set off again for Aden; thence to Ormuz, at the entrance of the gulf of Persia, where all the rich merchandise of the east was brought to be transported thence by Syria and Egypt into Europe.

Having taken note of everything here, he embarked on the Red Sea, and arriving at the court of an Abyssinian prince named Escander, (the Arabic version of Alexander,) whom he considered the real Prester John. The Prince received him graciously, and manifested a disposition to favor the object of his embassy, but died suddenly, and his successor, Naut, refused to let Covilham depart, but kept him for many years about his person, as his prime councillor, lavishing on him wealth and honors. After all, this was not the real Prester John; who, as has been observed, was an Asiatic potentate.

No. XX.

MARCO POLO.*

THE travels of Marco Polo, or Paolo, furnish a key to many parts of the voyages and speculations of Columbus, which without it would hardly be comprehensible.

* In preparing the first edition of this work for the press the author had not the benefit of the English translation of Marco Polo, published a few years since, with admirable commentaries, by William Marsden, F. R. S. He availed himself, principally, of an Italian version in the Venetian edition of Ramusio (1606), the French translation by Bergeron, and an old and very incorrect Spanish translation. Having since procured the work of Mr. Marsden he has made considerable alterations in these notices of Marco Polo.

Marco Polo was a native of Venice, who, in the thirteenth century, made a journey into the remote, and at that time, unknown regions of the East, and filled all Christendom with curiosity by his account of the countries he had visited. He was preceded in his travels by his father Nicholas and his uncle Maffeo Polo. These two brothers were of an illustrious family in Venice, and embarked about the year 1255, on a commercial voyage to the East. Having traversed the Mediterranean and through the Bosphorus, they stopped for a short time at Constantinople, which city had recently been wrested from the Greeks by the joint arms of France and Venice. Here they disposed of their Italian merchandise, and, having purchased a stock of jewelry, departed on an adventurous expedition to trade with the western Tartars, who, having overrun many parts of Asia and Europe, were settling and forming cities in the vicinity of the Wolga. After traversing the Euxine to Soldaia (at present Sudak), a port in the Crimea, they continued on, by land and water, until they reached the military court, or rather camp of a Tartar prince named Barkah, a descendant of Ghengis Khan, into whose hand they confided all their merchandise. The barbaric chieftain, while he was dazzled by their precious commodities, was flattered by the entire confidence in his justice manifested by these strangers. He repaid them with princely munificence, and loaded them with favors during a

year that they remained at his court. A war breaking out between their patron and his cousin Hulagu, chief of the eastern Tartars, and Barkah being defeated, the Polos were embarrassed how to extricate themselves from the country and return home in safety. The road to Constantinople being cut off by the enemy, they took a circuitous route, round the head of the Caspian Sea, and through the deserts of Transoxiana, until they arrived in the city of Bokhara, where they resided for three years.

While here there arrived a Tartar nobleman who was on an embassy from the victorious Hulagu to his brother the Grand Khan. The ambassador became acquainted with the Venetians, and finding them to be versed in the Tartar tongue and possessed of curious and valuable knowledge he prevailed upon them to accompany him to the court of the Emperor, situated as they supposed at the very extremity of the East.

After a march of several months, being delayed by snow-storms and inundations, they arrived at the court of Cublai, otherwise called the Great Khan, which signifies King of Kings, being the sovereign potentate of the Tartars. This magnificent Prince received them with great distinction; he made inquiries about the countries and princes of the West, their civil and military government, and the manners and customs of the Latin nation. Above all he was curious on the subject of the Christian religion. He was so much

struck by their replies, that after holding a council with the chief persons of his kingdom, he entreated the two brothers to go on his part as ambassadors to the Pope, to entreat him to send a hundred learned men well instructed in the Christian faith, to impart a knowledge of it to the sages of his empire. He also entreated them to bring him a little oil from the lamp of our Saviour, in Jerusalem, which he concluded must have marvellous virtues. It has been supposed, and with great reason, that under this covert of religion, the shrewd Tartar sovereign veiled motives of a political nature. The influence of the Pope in promoting the crusades had caused his power to be known and respected throughout the East; it was of some moment therefore to conciliate his good-will. Cublai Khan had no bigotry nor devotion to any particular faith, and probably hoped by adopting Christianity to make it a common cause between himself and the warlike princes of Christendom, against his and their inveterate enemies, the Soldan of Egypt and the Saracens.

Having written letters to the Pope in the Tartar language, he delivered them to the Polos, and appointed one of the principal noblemen of his court to accompany them in their mission. On their taking leave he furnished them with a tablet of gold on which was engraved the royal arms; this was to serve as a passport, at sight of which the governors of the various provinces were to entertain them, to furnish them with

escorts through dangerous places, and render them all other necessary services at the expense of the Great Khan.

They had scarce proceeded twenty miles when the nobleman who accompanied them fell ill, and they were obliged to leave him and continue on their route. Their golden passport procured them every attention and facility throughout the dominions of the Great Khan. They arrived safely at Acre, in April, 1269. Here they received news of the recent death of the Pope Clement IV., at which they were much grieved, fearing it would cause delay in their mission. There was at that time in Acre a legate of the Holy Chair, Tebaldo di Vesconti, of Placentia, to whom they gave an account of their embassy. He heard them with great attention and interest, and advised them to await the election of a new pope, which must soon take place, before they proceeded to Rome on their mission. They determined in the interim to make a visit to their families, and accordingly departed for Negropont, and thence to Venice, where great changes had taken place in their domestic concerns during their long absence. The wife of Nicholas, whom he had left pregnant, had died in giving birth to a son, who had been named Marco.

As the contested election for the new pontiff remained pending for two years, they were uneasy, lest the Emperor of Tartary should grow impatient at

so long a postponement of the conversion of himself and his people; they determined therefore not to wait the election of a pope, but to proceed to Acre, and get such despatches and such ghostly ministry for the Grand Khan as the legate could furnish. On the second journey Nicholas Polo took with him his son Marco, who afterwards wrote an account of these travels.

They were again received with great favor by the Legate Tebaldo, who, anxious for the success of their mission, furnished them with letters to the Grand Khan, in which the doctrines of the Christian faith were fully expounded. With these, and with a supply of the holy oil from the Sepulchre, they once more set out in September, 1271, for the remote parts of Tartary. They had not long departed when missives arrived from Rome informing the Legate of his own election to the holy chair. He took the name of Gregory X., and decreed that in future, on the death of a pope, the cardinals should be shut up in conclave until they elected a successor; a wise regulation, which has since continued, enforcing a prompt decision and preventing intrigue.

Immediately on receiving intelligence of his election, he despatched a courier to the King of Armenia, requesting that the two Venetians might be sent back to him, if they had not departed. They joyfully returned, and were furnished with new letters to the

Khan. Two eloquent friars also, Nicholas Vincenti and Gilbert de Tripoli, were sent with them, with powers to ordain priests and bishops and to grant absolution. They had presents of crystal vases and other costly articles to deliver to the Grand Khan; and thus well provided they once more set forth on their journey.*

Arriving in Armenia, they ran great risk of their lives from the war which was raging, the Soldan of Babylon having invaded the country. They took refuge for some time with the superior of a monastery. Here the two reverend fathers, losing all courage to prosecute so perilous an enterprise, determined to remain, and the Venetians continued their journey. They were a long time on the way, and exposed to great hardships and sufferings from floods, and snow-storms, it being the winter season. At length they reached a town in the dominions of the Khan. That potentate sent officers to meet them at forty days' distance from the court, and to provide quarters for them during their journey.† He received them with great kindness, was highly gratified with the result of their mission and with the letters of the Pope, and having received from them some oil from the lamp of the

* Ramusio, tom. iii.

† Bergeron, by blunder in the translation from the original Latin, has stated that the Khan sent 40,000 men to escort them. This has drawn the ire of the critics upon Marco Polo, who have cited it as one of his monstrous exaggerations.

Holy Sepulchre, he had it locked up, and guarded it as a precious treasure.

The three Venetians, father, brother, and son were treated with such distinction by the Khan that the courtiers were filled with jealousy. Marco soon, however, made himself popular, and was particularly esteemed by the Emperor. He acquired the four principal languages of the country, and was of such remarkable capacity that, notwithstanding his youth, the Khan employed him in missions and services of importance in various parts of his dominions, some to the distance of even six months' journey. On these expeditions he was industrious in gathering all kinds of information respecting that vast empire ; and from notes and minutes made for the satisfaction of the Grand Khan, he afterwards composed the history of his travels.

After about seventeen years' residence in the Tartar court the Venetians felt a longing to return to their native country. Their patron was advanced in age and could not survive much longer, and after his death their return might be difficult if not impossible. They applied to the Grand Khan for permission to depart, but for a time met with a refusal, accompanied by friendly upbraidings. At length a singular train of events operated in their favor ; an embassy arrived from a Mogul Tartar prince, who ruled in Persia, and who was grand nephew to the Emperor. The object

was to entreat, as a spouse, a princess of the imperial lineage. A granddaughter of Cublai Khan, seventeen years of age, and of great beauty and accomplishments, was granted to the prayer of the prince, and departed for Persia with the ambassadors and with a splendid retinue, but after travelling for some months was obliged to return on account of the distracted state of the country.

The ambassadors despaired of conveying the beautiful bride to the arms of her expecting bridegroom, when Marco Polo returned from a voyage to certain of the Indian islands. His representations of the safety of a voyage in those seas, and his private instigations, induced the ambassadors to urge the Grand Khan for permission to convey the princess by sea to the gulf of Persia, and that the Christians might accompany them, as being best experienced in maritime affairs. Cublai Khan consented with great reluctance, and a splendid fleet was fitted out and victualled for two years, consisting of fourteen ships of four masts, some of which had crews of two hundred and fifty men.

On parting with the Venetians the munificent Khan gave them rich presents of jewels, and made them promise to return to him after they had visited their families. He authorized them to act as his ambassadors to the principal courts of Europe, and as on a former occasion, furnished them with tablets of gold, to serve, not merely as passports, but as orders upon

all commanders in his territories for accommodations and supplies.

They set sail therefore in the fleet with the Oriental princess and her attendants and the Persian ambassadors. The ships swept along the coast of Cochin China, stopped for three months at a port of the island of Sumatra, near the western entrance of the straits of Malacca, waiting for the change of the monsoon to pass the bay of Bengal. Traversing this vast expanse, they touched at the island of Ceylon, and then crossed the strait to the southern part of the great peninsula of India. Thence sailing up the Pirate coast, as it is called, the fleet entered the Persian Gulf, and arrived at the famous port of Olmuz, where it is presumed the voyage terminated, after eighteen months spent in traversing the Indian seas.

Unfortunately for the royal bride, who was the object of this splendid naval expedition, her bridegroom, the Mogul King, had died some time before her arrival, leaving a son named Ghazan, during whose minority the government was administered by his uncle, Kai-Khatu. According to the directions of the regent the princess was delivered to the youthful prince, son of her intended spouse. He was at that time at the head of an army on the borders of Persia. He was of a diminutive stature but of a great soul, and, on afterwards ascending the throne, acquired renown for his talents and virtues. What became of

the Eastern bride, who had travelled so far in quest of a husband, is not known, but everything favorable is to be inferred from the character of Ghazan.

The Polos remained some time in the court of the regent and then departed, with fresh tablets of gold given by that prince, to carry them in safety and honor through his dominions. As they had to traverse many countries where the traveller is exposed to extreme peril, they appeared on their journeys as Tartars of low condition, having converted all their wealth into precious stones and sewn them up in the folds and linings of their coarse garments. They had a long, difficult, and perilous journey to Trebizond, whence they proceeded to Constantinople, thence to Negropont, and finally to Venice, where they arrived in 1295, in good health and literally laden with riches. Having heard during their journey of the death of their old benefactor, Cublai Khan, they considered their diplomatic functions at an end, and also that they were absolved from the promise to return to his dominions.

Ramusio, in his preface to the narrative of Marco Polo, gives a variety of particulars concerning their arrival, which he compares to that of Ulysses. When they arrived at Venice they were known by nobody. So many years had elapsed since their departure without any tidings of them that they were either forgotten or considered dead. Besides, their foreign garb,

the influence of southern suns, and the similitude which men acquire to those among whom they reside for any length of time, had given them the look of Tartars rather than Italians.

They repaired to their own house, which was a noble palace, situated in the street of St. Giovanne Chrisostomo, and was afterwards known by the name of La Corte de la Milione. They found several of their relatives still inhabiting it; but they were slow in recollecting the travellers, not knowing of their wealth, and probably considering them, from their coarse and foreign attire, poor adventurers returned to be a charge upon their families. The Polos however took an effectual mode of quickening the memories of their friends and insuring themselves a loving reception. They invited them all to a grand banquet. When their guests arrived they received them richly dressed in garments of crimson satin of Oriental fashion. When water had been served for the washing of hands and the company were summoned to table, the travellers, who had retired, appeared again in still richer robes of crimson damask. The first dresses were cut up and distributed among the servants, being of such length that they swept the ground, which, says Ramusio, was the mode in those days with dresses worn within doors. After the first course they again retired and came in dressed in crimson velvet, the damask dresses being likewise given to the domestics,

and the same was done at the end of the feast with their velvet robes when they appeared in the Venetian dress of the day. The guests were lost in astonishment, and could not comprehend the meaning of this masquerade. Having dismissed all the attendants, Marco Polo brought forth the coarse Tartar dresses in which they had arrived. Slashing them in several places with a knife, and ripping open the seams and lining, there tumbled forth rubies, sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, and other precious stones, until the whole table glittered with inestimable wealth, acquired from the munificence of the Grand Khan, and conveyed in this portable form through the perils of their long journey.

The company, observes Ramusio, were out of their wits with amazement, and now clearly perceived what they had at first doubted, that these in very truth were those honored and valiant gentlemen, the Polos, and accordingly paid them great respect and reverence.

The account of this curious feast is given by Ramusio on traditional authority, having heard it many times related by the illustrious Gasparo Malipiero, a very ancient gentleman, and a senator, of unquestionable veracity, who had it from his father, who had it from his grandfather, and so on up to the fountain-head.

When the fame of this banquet and of the wealth of the travellers came to be divulged throughout Ven-

ice, all the city, noble and simple, crowded to do honor to the extraordinary merit of the Polos. Maffeo, who was the eldest, was admitted to the dignity of the magistracy. The youth of the city came every day to visit and converse with Marco Polo, who was extremely amiable and communicative. They were insatiable in their inquiries about Cathay and the Grand Khan, which he answered with great courtesy, giving details with which they were vastly delighted, and, as he always spoke of the wealth of the Grand Khan in round numbers, they gave him the name of Messer Marco Milioni.

Some months after their return, Lampa Doria, commander of the Genoese navy, appeared in the vicinity of the island of Curzola with seventy galleys. Andrea Dandola, the Venetian admiral, was sent against him. Marco Polo commanded a galley of the fleet. His usual good fortune deserted him. Advancing the first in the line with his galley, and not being properly seconded, he was taken prisoner, thrown in irons, and carried to Genoa. Here he was detained for a long time in prison, and all offers of ransom rejected. His imprisonment gave great uneasiness to his father and uncle, fearing that he might never return. Seeing themselves in this unhappy state, with so much treasure, and no heirs, they consulted together. They were both very old men; but Nicolo, observes Ramusio, was of galliard complexion. It was determined

he should take a wife. He did so; and, to the wonder of his friends, in four years had three children.

In the meanwhile, the fame of Marco Polo's travels had circulated in Genoa. His prison was daily crowded with nobility, and he was supplied with everything that could cheer him in his confinement. A Genoese gentleman, who visited him every day, at length prevailed upon him to write an account of what he had seen. He had his papers and journals sent to him from Venice, and with the assistance of a friend, or, as some will have it, his fellow-prisoner, produced the work which afterwards made such noise throughout the world.

The merit of Marco Polo at length procured him his liberty. He returned to Venice, where he found his father with a house full of children. He took it in good part, followed the old man's example, married, and had two daughters, Moretta and Fantina. The date of the death of Marco Polo is unknown; he is supposed to have been, at the time, about seventy years of age. On his death-bed, he is said to have been exhorted by his friends to retract what he had published, or, at least, to disavow those parts commonly regarded as fictitious. He replied indignantly that so far from having exaggerated, he had not told one half of the extraordinary things of which he had been an eye-witness.

Marco Polo died without male issue. Of the three

sons of his father by the second marriage, only one had children, viz., five sons and one daughter. The sons died without leaving issue; the daughter inherited all her father's wealth and married into the noble and distinguished house of Trevesino. Thus the male line of the Polos ceased in 1417, and the family name was extinguished.

Such are the principal particulars known of Marco Polo, a man whose travels for a long time made a great noise in Europe, and will be found to have had a great effect upon modern discovery. His splendid account of the extent, wealth, and population of the Tartar territories filled every one with admiration. The possibility of bringing all those regions under the dominion of the Church, and rendering the Grand Khan an obedient vassal of the Holy Chair, was for a long time a favorite topic among the enthusiastic missionaries of Christendom, and there were many saints-errant who undertook to effect the conversion of this magnificent infidel.

Even at the distance of two centuries, when the enterprises for the discovery of the new route to India had set all the warm heads of Europe madding about these remote regions of the East, the conversion of the Grand Khan became again a popular theme; and it was too speculative and romantic an enterprise not to catch the vivid imagination of Columbus. In all his voyages, he will be found continually to be seek-

ing after the territories of the Grand Khan, and even after his last expedition, when nearly worn out by age, hardships, and infirmities, he offered, in a letter to the Spanish monarchs, written from a bed of sickness, to conduct any missionary to the territories of the Tartar emperor, who would undertake his conversion.

No. XXI.

THE WORK OF MARCO POLO.

THE work of Marco Polo is stated by some to have been originally written in Latin,* though the most probable opinion is that it was written in the Venetian dialect of the Italian. Copies of it in manuscript were multiplied and rapidly circulated; translations were made into various languages, until the invention of printing enabled it to be widely diffused throughout Europe. In the course of these translations and successive editions, the original text, according to Purchas, has been much vitiated, and it is probable many extravagances in numbers and measurements with which Marco Polo is charged, may be the errors of translators and printers.

When the work first appeared, it was considered by some as made up of fictions and extravagances, and

* *Hist. des Voyages*, tom. xxvii., lib. iv., cap. 3. Paris, 1549.

Vossius assures us that even after the death of Marco Polo, he continued to be a subject of ridicule among the light and unthinking, insomuch that he was frequently personated at masquerades by some wit or droll, who in his feigned character related all kinds of extravagant fables and adventures. His work however excited great attention among thinking men, containing evidently a fund of information concerning vast and splendid countries, before unknown to the European world. Vossius assures us that it was at one time highly esteemed by the learned. Francis Pepin, author of the Brandenburgh version, styles Polo a man commendable for his piety, prudence, and fidelity. Athanasius Kircher, in his account of China, says that none of the ancients have described the kingdoms of the remote East with more exactness. Various other learned men of past times have borne testimony to his character, and most of the substantial parts of his work have been authenticated by subsequent travellers. The most able and ample vindication of Marco Polo, however, is to be found in the English translation of his work, with copious notes and commentaries, by William Marsden, F. R. S. He has diligently discriminated between what Marlo Polo relates from his own observation, and what he relates as gathered from others; he points out the errors that have arisen from misinterpretations, omissions, or interpolations of translators, and he claims

all proper allowance for the superstitious coloring of parts of the narrative from the belief, prevalent among the most wise and learned of his day, in miracles and magic. After perusing the work of Mr. Marsden, the character of Marco Polo rises in the estimation of the reader. It is evident that his narration, as far as related from his own observations, is correct, and that he had really traversed a great part of Tartary and China, and navigated in the Indian seas. Some of the countries and many of the islands, however, are evidently described from accounts given by others, and in these accounts are generally found the fables which have excited incredulity and ridicule. As he composed his work after his return home, partly from memory and partly from memorandums, he was liable to confuse what he had heard with what he had seen, and thus to give undue weight to many fables and exaggerations which he had received from others.

Much has been said of a map brought from Cathay by Marco Polo, which was conserved in the convent of San Michale de Murano in the vicinity of Venice, and in which the Cape of Good Hope, and the island of Madagascar were indicated; countries which the Portuguese claim the merit of having discovered two centuries afterwards. It has been suggested also that Columbus had visited the convent and examined this map, whence he derived some of his ideas concerning

the coast of India. According to Ramusio, however, who had been at the convent, and was well acquainted with the prior, the map preserved there was one copied by a friar from the original one of Marco Polo, and many alterations and additions had since been made by other hands, so that for a long time it lost all credit with judicious people, until on comparing it with the work of Marco Polo it was found in the main to agree with his descriptions.* The Cape of Good Hope was doubtless among the additions made subsequent to the discoveries of the Portuguese. † Columbus makes no mention of this map, which he most probably would have done had he seen it. He seems to have been entirely guided by the one furnished by Paulo Toscanelli, and which was apparently projected after the original map, or after the descriptions of Marco Polo and the maps of Ptolemy.

When the attention of the world was turned towards the remote parts of Asia in the fifteenth century, and the Portuguese were making their attempts to circumnavigate Africa, the narration of Marco Polo again rose to notice. This, with the travels of Nicolo

* Ramusio, vol. ii., p. 17.

† Mr. Marsden, who has inspected a splendid fac-simile of this map reserved in the British Museum, objects even to the fundamental part of it: "where," he observes, "situations are given to places that seem quite inconsistent with the descriptions in the travels and cannot be attributed to their author, although inserted on the supposed authority of his writings."—Marsden's *Marco Polo*, Introd., p. xlii.

le Comte, the Venetian, and of Hieronimo da San Stefano, a Genoese, are said to have been the principal lights by which the Portuguese guided themselves in their voyages.*

Above all, the influences which the work of Marco Polo had over the mind of Columbus gives it particular interest and importance. It was evidently an oracular work with him. He frequently quotes it, and on his voyages, supposing himself to be on the Asiatic coast, he is continually endeavoring to discover the islands and mainlands described in it, and to find the famous Cipango.

It is proper therefore to specify some of those places, and the manner in which they are described by a Venetian traveller, that the reader may more fully understand the anticipations which were haunting the mind of Columbus in his voyages among the West Indian Islands and along the coast of Terra Firma.

The winter residence of the Great Khan, according to Marco Polo, was in the city of Cambalu, or Kanbalu (since ascertained to be Pekin), in the province of Cathay. This city, he says, was twenty-four miles square and admirably built. It was impossible, according to Marco Polo, to describe the vast amount and variety of merchandise and manufactures brought there; it would seem they were enough to furnish the universe. "Here are to be seen in wonderful abun-

* *Hist. des Voyages*, tom xl., lib. xi., chap. 4.

dance the precious stones, the pearls, the silks, and the diverse perfumes of the East; scarcely a day passes that there does not arrive nearly a thousand cars laden with silk, of which they make admirable stuffs in this city."

The palace of the Great Khan is magnificently built, and four miles in circuit. It is rather a group of palaces. In the interior it is resplendent with gold and silver; and in it are guarded the precious vases and jewels of the sovereign. All the appointments of the Khan for war, for the chase, for various festivities, are described in gorgeous terms. But though Marco Polo is magnificent in his description of the provinces of Cathay and its imperial city of Cambalu, he outdoes himself when he comes to describe the province of Mangi. This province is supposed to be the southern part of China. It contains, he says, twelve hundred cities. The capital Quinsai, (supposed to be the city of Hang-cheu), was twenty-five miles from the sea, but communicated by a river with a port situated on the sea-coast, and had great trade with India.

The name Quinsai, according to Marco Polo, signifies the City of Heaven; he says he has been in it and examined it diligently, and affirms it to be the largest in the world; and so undoubtedly it is if the measurement of the traveller is to be taken literally, for he declares it is one hundred miles in circuit. This seeming exaggeration has been explained by suppos-

ing him to mean Chinese miles, or *li*, which are to the Italian miles in the proportion of three to eight; and Mr. Marsden observes that the walls even of the modern city, the limits of which have been considerably contracted, are estimated by travellers at sixty *li*. The ancient city has evidently been of immense extent, and as Marco Polo could not be supposed to have measured the walls himself, he has probably taken the loose and incorrect estimates of the inhabitants. He describes it also as built upon little islands like Venice, and has twelve thousand stone bridges,* the arches of which are so high that the largest vessels can pass under them without lowering their masts. It has, he affirms, three thousand baths, and six hundred thousand families, including domestics. It abounds with magnificent houses, and has a lake thirty miles in circuit within its walls, on the banks of which are superb palaces of people of rank. † The

* Another blunder in translation has drawn upon Marco Polo the indignation of George Hornius, who (in his *Origin of America*, iv., 3) exclaims: "Who can believe all that he says of the city of Quinsai? as, for example, that it has stone bridges twelve thousand miles high!" etc. It is probable that many of the exaggerations in the accounts of Marco Polo are in fact the errors of his translators.

Mandeville, speaking of this same city, which he calls Causai, says it is built on the sea like Venice, and has twelve hundred bridges.

† Sir George Staunton mentions this lake as being a beautiful sheet of water, about three or four miles in diameter; its margin ornamented with houses and gardens of Mandarins, together with temples, monasteries for the priests of Fo, and an imperial palace.

inhabitants of Quinsai are very voluptuous, and indulge in all kinds of luxuries and delights, particularly the women, who are extremely beautiful. There are many merchants and artisans, but the masters do not work; they employ servants to do all their labor. The province of Mangi was conquered by the Great Khan, who divided it into nine kingdoms, appointing to each a tributary king. He drew from it an immense revenue, for the country abounded in gold, silver, silks, sugar, spices, and perfumes.

ZIPANGU, ZIPANGRI, OR CIPANGO.

FIFTEEN hundred miles from the shores of Mangi, according to Marco Polo, lay the great island of Zipangu, by some written Zipangri, and by Columbus Cipango.* Marco Polo describes it as abounding in gold which, however, the king seldom permits to be transported out of the island. The king has a magnificent palace covered with plates of gold, as in other countries the palaces are covered with sheets of lead or copper. The halls and chambers are likewise cov-

* Supposed to be those islands collectively called Japan. They are named by the Chinese Ge-pen, the terminating syllable *gu* added by Marco Polo is supposed to be the Chinese word *kue*, signifying kingdom, which is commonly annexed to the names of foreign countries. As the distance of the nearest part of the southern island from the coast of China near Ning-po, is not more than five hundred Italian miles, Mr. Marsden supposes Marco Polo in stating it to be fifteen hundred, means Chinese miles, or *li*, which are in the proportion of somewhat more than one third of the former.

ered with gold, the windows adorned with it, sometimes in plates of the thickness of two fingers. The island also produces vast quantities of the largest and finest pearls, together with a variety of precious stones; so that, in fact, it abounds in riches. The Great Khan made several attempts to conquer this island, but in vain; which is not to be wondered at, if it be true what Marco Polo relates, that the inhabitants had certain stones of a charmed virtue inserted between the skin and the flesh of their right arms, which, through the power of diabolical enchantments, rendered them invulnerable. This island was an object of diligent search to Columbus.

About the island of Zipangu or Cipango, and between it and the coast of Mangi, the sea, according to Marco Polo, is studded with small islands to the number of seven thousand four hundred and forty, of which the greater part are inhabited. There is not one which does not produce odoriferous trees and perfumes in abundance. Columbus thought himself at one time in the midst of these islands.

These are the principal places described by Marco Polo, which occur in the letters and journal of Columbus. The island of Cipango was the first land he expected to make, and he intended to visit afterwards the province of Mangi, and to seek the Great Khan in his city of Cambalu, in the province of Cathay. Unless the reader can bear in mind these sumptuous

descriptions of Marco Polo, of countries teeming with wealth, and cities where the very domes and palaces flamed with gold, he will have but a faint idea of the splendid anticipations which filled the imagination of Columbus when he discovered, as he supposed, the extremity of Asia. It was his confident expectation of soon arriving at these countries, and realizing the accounts of the Venetian, that induced him to hold forth those promises of immediate wealth to the sovereigns, which caused so much disappointment, and brought upon him the frequent reproach of exciting false hopes and indulging in wilful exaggerations.

No. XXII.

SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE.

NEXT to Marco Polo the travels of Sir John Mandeville, and his account of the territories of the Great Khan along the coast of Asia seem to have been treasured up in the mind of Columbus.

Mandeville was born in the city of St. Albans. He was devoted to study from his earliest childhood, and after finishing his general education, applied himself to medicine. Having a great desire to see the remotest parts of the earth then known, that is to say, Asia and Africa, and above all to visit the Holy Land, he left England in 1332, and passing through France embarked at Marsailles. According to his own ac-

count, he visited Turkey, Armenia, Egypt, Upper and Lower Lybia, Syria, Persia, Chaldea, Ethiopia, Tartary, Amazonia, and the Indies, residing in their principal cities. But most, he says, he delighted in the Holy Land, where he remained for a long time, examining it with the greatest minuteness, and endeavoring to follow all the traces of our Saviour. After an absence of thirty-four years he returned to England, but found himself forgotten and unknown by the greater part of his countrymen and a stranger in his native place. He wrote a history of his travels in three languages, English, French, and Latin, for he was master of many tongues. He addressed his work to Edward III. His wanderings do not seem to have made him either pleased with the world at large, or contented with his home. He railed at the age, saying that there was no more virtue extant, that the Church was ruined; error prevalent among the clergy; simony upon the throne; and, in a word, that the devil reigned triumphant. He soon returned to the continent and died at Liege in 1372. He was buried in the abbey of the Gulielmites, in the suburbs of that city, where Ortelius, in his *Itinerarium Belgiæ*, says that he saw his monument, on which was the effigy in stone, of a man with a forked beard and his hands raised towards his head (probably folded as in prayer, according to the manner of old tombs), and a lion at his feet. There was an inscription stating his name, quality, and

calling, (*viz.*, professor of medicine,) that he was very pious, very learned, and very charitable to the poor, and that after having travelled over the whole world he had died at Liege. The people of the convent showed also his spurs, and the housings of the horses which he had ridden in his travels.

The descriptions given by Mandeville of the Grand Khan, of the province of Cathay, and the city of Cambalu, are no less splendid than those of Marco Polo. The royal palace was more than two leagues in circumference. The grand hall had twenty-four columns of copper and gold. There were more than three hundred thousand men occupied and living in and about the palace, of which more than one hundred thousand were employed in taking care of ten thousand elephants and of a vast variety of animals, birds of prey, falcons, parrots and paroquets. On days of festival there were even twice the number of men employed. The title of this potentate in his letters was "Khan, the Son of God, exalted possessor of all the earth, master of those who are masters of others." On his seal was engraved "God reigns in Heaven, Khan upon earth."

Mandeville has become proverbial for indulging in a traveller's exaggerations; yet his accounts of the countries which he visited have been found far more veracious than had been imagined. His descriptions of Cathay, and the wealthy province of Mangi, agreeing with those of Marco Polo, had great authority with Columbus.

No. XXIII.

THE ZONES.

THE zones were imaginary bands or circles in the heavens producing an effect of climate on corresponding belts on the globe of the earth. The polar circles and the tropics mark these divisions.

The central region, lying beneath the track of the sun, was termed the torrid zone ; the two regions between the tropics and the polar circles, were termed the temperate zones, and the remaining parts, between the polar circles and the poles, the frigid zones.

The frozen regions near the poles were considered uninhabitable and unnavigable on account of the extreme cold. The burning zone, or rather the central part of it, immediately about the equator, was considered uninhabitable, unproductive, and impassable in consequence of the excessive heat. The temperate zones, lying between them, were supposed to be fertile and salubrious, and suited to the purposes of life.

The globe was divided into two hemispheres by the equator, an imaginary line encircling it at equal distance from the poles. The whole of the world known to the ancients was contained in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere.

It was imagined that if there should be inhabitants in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere, there could still be no communication with them on account of the burning zone which intervened.

Parmenides, according to Strabo, was the inventor of this theory of the five zones, but he made the torrid zone extend on each side of the equator beyond the tropics. Aristotle supported this doctrine of the zones. In his time nothing was known of the extreme northern parts of Europe and Asia, nor of interior Ethiopia and the southern part of Africa, extending beyond the tropic of Capricorn to the Cape of Good Hope. Aristotle believed that there was habitable earth in the southern hemisphere, but that it was forever divided from the part of the world already known, by the impassable zone of scorching heat at the equator.*

Pliny supported the opinion of Aristotle concerning the burning zones. "The temperature of the central region of the earth," he observes, "where the sun runs his course, is burnt up as with fire. The temperate zones which lie on either side can have no communication with each other in consequence of the fervent heat of this region."†

Strabo (lib. xi.) in mentioning this theory, gives it likewise his support; and others of the ancient philosophers, as well as the poets, might be cited to show the general prevalence of the belief.

It must be observed that, at the time when Columbus defended his proposition before the learned board at Salamanca, the ancient theory of burning zone had

* Aristot., 2 Met., cap. 5. † Pliny, lib. i., cap. 61.

not yet been totally disproved by modern discovery. The Portuguese, it is true, had penetrated within the tropics ; but, though the whole of the space between the tropic of Cancer and that of Capricorn, in common parlance, was termed the torrid zone ; the uninhabitable and impassable part, strictly speaking, according to the doctrine of the ancients, only extended a limited number of degrees on each side of the equator ; forming about a third, or at most, the half of the zone. The proofs which Columbus endeavored to draw therefore from the voyages made to St. George la Mina, were not conclusive with those who were bigoted to the ancient theory, and who placed this scorching region still farther southward, and immediately about the equator.

No. XXIV.

ON THE ATALANTIS OF PLATO.

THE island Atalantis is mentioned by Plato in his dialogue of Timæus. Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, is supposed to have travelled into Egypt. He is in an ancient city on the Delta, the fertile island formed by the Nile, and is holding converse with certain learned priests on the antiquities of remote ages, when one of them gives him a description of the island of Atalantis, and of its destruction, which he describes as having

taken place before the conflagration of the world by Phæton.

This island, he was told, had been situated in the Western Ocean, opposite to the Straits of Gibraltar. There was an easy passage from it to other islands which lay adjacent to a large continent, exceeding in size all Europe and Asia. Neptune settled in this island, from whose son Atlas its name was derived, and he divided it among his ten sons. His descendants reigned here in regular succession for many ages. They made irruptions into Europe and Africa, subduing all Lybia as far as Egypt, and Europe to Asia Minor. They were resisted, however, by the Athenians, and driven back to their Atlantic territories. Shortly after this there was a tremendous earthquake, and an overflowing of the sea, which continued for a day and a night. In the course of this the vast island of Atalantis, and all its splendid cities and warlike nations, were swallowed up, and sunk to the bottom of the sea, which spreading its waters over the chasm, formed the Atlantic Ocean. For a long time, however, the sea was not navigable, on account of rocks and shelves, of mud and slime, and the ruins of that drowned country.

Many in modern times have considered this a mere fable ; others suppose that Plato, while in Egypt, had received some vague accounts of the Canary Islands, and, on his return to Greece, finding those islands so

entirely unknown to his countrymen, had made them the seat of his political and moral speculations. Some, however, have been disposed to give greater weight to this story of Plato. They imagine that such an island may really have existed, filling up a great part of the Atlantic, and that the continent beyond it was America, which, in such case, was not unknown to the ancients. Kircher supposes it to have been an island extending from the Canaries to the Azores; that it was really ingulfed in one of the convulsions of the globe, and that those small islands are mere shattered fragments of it.

As a further proof that the New World was not unknown to the ancients, many have cited the singular passage in the *Medea* of Seneca, which is wonderfully apposite, and shows, at least, how nearly the warm imagination of a poet may approach to prophecy. The predictions of the ancient oracles were rarely so unequivocal.

> "Venient annis
> Sæcula seris, quibus Oceanus
> Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens
> Pateat tellus, Typhisque novos
> Detegat orbes, nec sit terris
> Ultima Thule."

Gosselin in his able research into voyages of the ancients, supposes the Atalantis of Plato to have been nothing more nor less than one of the nearest of the Canaries, *viz.*, Fortaventura or Lancerote.

No. XXV.

THE IMAGINARY ISLAND OF ST. BRANDAN.

ONE of the most singular geographical illusions on record is that which for a long while haunted the imaginations of the inhabitants of the Canaries. They fancied they beheld a mountainous island about ninety leagues in length, lying far to the westward. It was only seen at intervals, but in perfectly clear and serene weather. To some it seemed one hundred leagues distant, to others forty, to others only fifteen or eighteen.* On attempting to reach it, however, it somehow or other eluded the search, and was nowhere to be found. Still there were so many eye-witnesses of credibility who concurred in testifying to their having seen it, and the testimony of the inhabitants of different islands agreed so well as to its form and position, that its existence was generally believed, and geographers inserted it in their maps. It is laid down on the globe of Martin Behem, projected in 1492, as delineated by M. De Murr, and it will be found in most of the maps of the time of Columbus, placed commonly about two hundred leagues west of the Canaries. During the time that Columbus was making his proposition to the court of Portugal, an inhabitant of the Canaries applied to King John II. for a vessel to go in search of this island. In the archives of the Torre do

* Feyjoo, *Theatro Critico*, tom. iv., d. 10, § 29.

Tombo* also, there is a record of a contract made by the crown of Portugal with Fernando de Ulmo, cavalier of the royal household, and captain of the island of Tercera, wherein he undertakes to go at his own expense, in quest of an island or islands, or Terra Firma, supposed to be the Island of the Seven Cities, on condition of having jurisdiction over the same for himself and his heirs, allowing one tenth of the revenues to the King. This Ulmo, finding the expedition above his capacity, associated one Juan Alfonso del Estreito in the enterprise. They were bound to be ready to sail with two caravels in the month of March, 1487.† The fate of their enterprise is unknown.

The name of St. Brandan, or Borondon, given to this imaginary island from time immemorial, is said to be derived from a Scotch abbot, who flourished in the sixth century, and who is called sometimes by the foregoing appellations, sometimes St. Blandano, or St. Blandanus. In the *Martyrology* of the order of St. Augustine, he is said to be the patriarch of three thousand monks. About the middle of the sixth century, he accompanied his disciple, St. Maclovio, or St. Malo, in search of certain islands possessing the delights of paradise, which they were told existed in the midst of the ocean, and were inhabited by infidels. These most adventurous saints-errant wandered for a long

* Lib. iv., *De la Chancelaria del Rey Dn. Juan II.*, fol. 101.
† *Torre do Tombo.* Lib., *Das Ylhas*, f. 119.

time upon the ocean, and at length landed upon an island called Ima. Here St. Malo found the body of a giant lying in a sepulchre. He resuscitated him, and had much interesting conversation with him, the giant informing him that the inhabitants of that island had some notions of the Trinity, and, moreover, giving him a gratifying account of the torments which Jews and Pagans suffered in the infernal regions. Finding the giant so docile and reasonable, St. Malo expounded to him the doctrines of the Christian religion, converted him, and baptized him by the name of Mildum. The giant, however, either through weariness of life, or eagerness to enjoy the benefits of his conversion, begged permission, at the end of fifteen days, to die again, which was granted him.

According to another account, the giant told them he knew of an island in the ocean, defended by walls of burnished gold, so resplendent that they shone like crystal, but to which there was no entrance. At their request, he undertook to guide them to it, and taking the cable of their ship, threw himself into the sea. He had not proceeded far, however, when a tempest rose, and obliged them all to return, and shortly after the giant died.* A third legend makes the saint pray to heaven on Easter day, that they may be permitted to find land where they may celebrate the offices of

* Fr Gregorio Garcia, *Origen de los Indies*, lib. i., cap. 9.

religion with becoming state. An island immediately appears, on which they land, perform a solemn mass, and the sacrament of the Eucharist; after which, re-embarking and making sail, they behold to their astonishment the supposed island suddenly plunge to the bottom of the sea, being nothing else than a monstrous whale.* When the rumor circulated of an island seen from the Canaries, which always eluded the search, the legends of St. Brandan were revived, and applied to this unapproachable land. We are told, also, that there was an ancient Latin manuscript in the archives of the cathedral church of the Grand Canary, in which the adventures of these saints were recorded. Through carelessness, however, this manuscript has disappeared.† Some have maintained that this island was known to the ancients, and was the same mentioned by Ptolemy among the Fortunate or Canary Islands, by the names of Aprositus,‡ or the Inacessible; and which, according to friar Diego Philipo, in his book on the Incarnation of Christ, shows that it possessed the same quality in ancient times of deluding the eye and being unattainable to the feet of mortals.§ But whatever belief the ancients may have had on the subject, it is certain that it took a strong hold on the faith of the moderns during the

* Sigeberto, *Epist. ad Tietmar.* Abbat.
† Nuñez de la Pena. *Conquist. de la Gran Canaria.*
‡ Ptolemy, lib. iv., tom. iv.
§ Fr. D. Philipo, lib. viii., fol. 25.

prevalent rage for discovery; nor did it lack abundant testimonials. Don Joseph de Viera y Clavijo says there never was a more difficult paradox nor problem in the science of geography; since, to affirm the existence of this island, is to trample upon sound criticism, judgment, and reason; and to deny it, one must abandon tradition and experience, and suppose that many persons of credit had not the proper use of their senses." *

The belief in this island has continued long since the time of Columbus. It was repeatedly seen, and by various persons at a time, always in the same place and of the same form. In 1526 an expedition set off for the Canaries in quest of it, commanded by Fernando de Troya and Fernando Alvarez. They cruised in the wonted direction, but in vain, and their failure ought to have undeceived the public. "The phantasm of the island, however," says Viera, "had such a secret enchantment for all who beheld it, that the public preferred doubting the good conduct of the explorers than their own senses." In 1570 the appearances were so repeated and clear, that there was a universal fever of curiosity awakened among the people of the Canaries, and it was determined to send forth another expedition.

That they may not appear to act upon light grounds, an exact investigation was previously made of all the

* *Hist. Isl. Can.*, lib. i., cap. 28.

persons of talent and credibility who had seen these apparitions of land, or who had other proofs of its existence. Alonzo de Espinosa, Governor of the island of Ferro, accordingly made a report, in which more than one hundred witnesses, several of them persons of the highest respectability, deposed that they had beheld the unknown island about forty leagues to the northwest of Ferro; that they had contemplated it with calmness and certainty, and had seen the sun set behind one of its points.

Testimonials of still greater force came from the islands of Palma and Teneriffe. There were certain Portuguese who affirmed, that, being driven about by a tempest, they had come upon the island of St. Borondon. Pedro Vello, who was the pilot of the vessel, affirmed, that having anchored in a bay, he landed with several of the crew. They drank fresh water in a brook, and beheld in the sand the print of footsteps, double the size of an ordinary man, and the distance between them was in proportion. They found a cross nailed to a neighboring tree; near to which were three stones placed in form of a triangle, with signs of fire having been made among them, probably to cook shell-fish. Having seen much cattle and sheep grazing in the neighborhood, two of their party armed with lances went into the woods in pursuit of them. The night was approaching, the heavens began to lower, and a harsh wind arose. The people on board

the ship cried out that she was dragging her anchor, whereupon Vello entered the boat and hurried on board. In an instant they lost sight of land; being as it were swept away in the hurricane. When the storm had passed away, and the sea and sky were again serene, they searched in vain for the island; not a trace of it was to be seen, and they had to pursue their voyage, lamenting the loss of their two companions who had been abandoned in the wood.*

A learned licentiate, Pedro Ortiz de Funez, Inquisitor of the Grand Canary, while on a visit at Teneriffe, summoned several persons before him, who testified having seen the island. Among them was one Marcos Verde, a man well known in those parts. He stated that in returning from Barbary and arriving in the neighborhood of the Canaries, he beheld land, which, according to his maps and calculations, could not be any of the known islands. He concluded it to be the far-famed St. Borondon. Overjoyed at having discovered this land of mystery, he coasted along its spell-bound shores, until he anchored in a beautiful harbor formed by the mouth of a mountain ravine. Here he landed with several of his crew. It was now, he said, the hour of the *Ave Maria*, or of vespers. The sun being set, the shadows began to spread over the land. The voyagers having separated, wandered

* Nuñez de la Pena, lib. i, cap. 1. Viera, *Hist. Isl. Can.*, tom. i., cap. 28.

about in different directions, until out of hearing of each other's shouts. Those on board, seeing the night approaching, made signal to summon back the wanderers to the ship. They re-embarked, intending to resume their investigations on the following day. Scarcely were they on board however when a whirlwind came rushing down the ravine, with such violence as to drag the vessel from her anchor, and hurry her out to sea; and they never saw anything more of this hidden and inhospitable island.

Another testimony remains on record in manuscript of one Abreu Galindo, but whether taken at this time does not appear. It was that of a French adventurer, who, many years before, making a voyage among the Canaries, was overtaken by a violent storm which carried away his masts. At length the furious winds drove him to the shores of an unknown island covered with stately trees. Here he landed with part of his crew, and choosing a tree proper for a mast, cut it down and began to shape it for his purpose. The guardian power of this island, however, resented as usual this invasion of his forbidden shores. The heavens assumed a dark and threatening aspect; the night was approaching, and the mariners, fearing some impending evil, abandoned their labor and returned on board. They were borne away as usual from the coast, and the next day arrived at the island of Palma.*

* Nuñez, *Conquist. de la Gran Canaria.* Viera, *Hist.*, etc.

The mass of testimony collected by official authority in 1570 seemed so satisfactory that another expedition was fitted out in the same year in the island of Palma. It was commanded by Fernando de Villabolos, regidor of the island, but was equally fruitless with the preceding. St. Borondon seemed disposed only to tantalize the world with distant and serene glimpses of his ideal paradise, or to reveal it amidst storms to tempest-tossed mariners, but to hide it completely from the view of all who diligently sought it. Still the people of Palma adhered to their favorite chimera. Thirty-four years afterwards, in 1605, they sent another ship on the quest, commanded by Gaspar Perez de Acosta, an accomplished pilot, accompanied by the Padre Lorenzo Pinedo, a holy Franciscan friar skilled in natural science. St. Borondon, however, refused to reveal his island to either monk or mariner. After cruising about in every direction, sounding, observing the skies, the clouds, the winds, everything that could furnish indications, they returned without having seen anything to authorize a hope.

Upwards of a century now elapsed without any new attempt to seek this fairy island. Every now and then, it is true, the public mind was agitated by fresh reports of its having been seen. Lemons and other fruits, and the green branches of trees which floated to the shores of Gomera and Ferro, were pronounced to be from the enchanted groves of St. Borondon. At

length, in 1721, the public infatuation again rose to such a height that a fourth expedition was sent, commanded by Don Gaspar Dominguez, a man of probity and talent. As this was an expedition of solemn and mysterious import, he had two holy friars as apostolical chaplains. They made sail from the island of Teneriffe towards the end of October, leaving the populace in an indescribable state of anxious curiosity mingled with superstition. The ship however returned from its cruise as unsuccessful as all its predecessors.

We have no account of any expedition being since undertaken, though the island still continued to be a subject of speculation, and occasionally to reveal its shadowy mountains to the eyes of favored individuals. In a letter written from the island of Gomera, 1759, by a Franciscan monk to one of his friends, he relates having seen it from the village of Alaxero at six in the morning of the 3d of May. It appeared to consist of two lofty mountains, with a deep valley between; and on contemplating it with a telescope, the valley or ravine appeared to be filled with trees. He summoned the curate, Antonio Joseph Manrique, and upwards of forty other persons, all of whom beheld it plainly.*

Nor is this island delineated merely in ancient maps of the time of Columbus. It is laid down as one of the Canary Islands in a French map published in 1704;

* Viera, *Hist. Isl. Can.*, tom. i., cap. 28.

and Mons. Gautier, in a geographical chart, annexed to his *Observations on Natural History*, published in 1755, places it five degrees to the west of the island of Ferro, in the 29th degree of north latitude.*

Such are the principal facts existing relative to the island of St. Brandan. Its reality was for a long time a matter of firm belief. It was in vain that repeated voyages and investigations proved its non-existence; the public, after trying all kinds of sophistry, took refuge in the supernatural to defend their favorite chimera. They maintained that it was rendered inaccessible to mortals by Divine Providence or by diabolical magic. Most inclined to the former. All kinds of extravagant fancies were indulged concerning it †; some confounded it with the fabled Island of the Seven Cities, situated somewhere in the bosom of the ocean, where in old times seven bishops and their followers had taken refuge from the Moors. Some of the Portuguese imagined it to be the abode of their lost king, Sebastian. The Spaniards pretended that Roderick, the last of their Gothic kings, had fled thither from the Moors after the disastrous battle of the Guadalete. Others suggested that it might be the seat of the terrestrial paradise, the place where Enoch and Elijah remained in a state of blessedness until the final day; and that it was made at times apparent to the eyes, but invisible to the search of mortals.

* Viera, *Hist. Isl. Can.*, tom. i., cap. 28. † *Idem.*

Poetry, it is said, has owed to this popular belief one of its beautiful fictions, and the garden of Armida, where Rinaldo was detained enchanted, and which Tasso places in one of the Canary Islands, has been identified with the imaginary St. Borondon.*

The learned father Feyjoo † has given a philosophical solution to this geographical problem. He attributes all these appearances, which have been so numerous and so well authenticated as not to admit of doubt, to certain atmospherical deceptions, like that of the Fata Morgana seen at times in the Straits of Messina, where the city of Reggio and its surrounding country is reflected in the air above the neighboring sea; a phenomenon which has likewise been witnessed in front of the city of Marseilles. As to the tales of the mariners who had landed on these forbidden shores, and been hurried thence in whirlwinds and tempests, he considers them as mere fabrications.

As the populace, however, reluctantly give up anything that partakes of the marvellous and mysterious, and as the same atmospherical phenomena, which first gave birth to the illusion, may still continue, it is not improbable that a belief in the island of St. Brandan may still exist among the ignorant and credulous of the Canaries, and that they at times behold its fairy mountains rising above the distant horizon of the Atlantic.

* Viera, *ubi sup.*

† *Theatro Critico*, tom. iv., d. x.

No. XXVI.

THE ISLAND OF THE SEVEN CITIES.

ONE of the popular traditions concerning the ocean, which were current during the times of Columbus, was that of the Island of the Seven Cities. It was recorded in an ancient legend, that at the time of the conquest of Spain and Portugal by the Moors, when the inhabitants fled in every direction to escape from slavery, seven bishops, followed by a great number of their people, took shipping and abandoned themselves to their fate on the high seas. After tossing about for some time, they landed on an unknown island in the midst of the ocean. Here the bishops burnt the ships, to prevent the desertion of their followers, and founded seven cities. Various pilots of Portugal, it was said, had reached that island at different times, but had never returned to give any information concerning it, having been detained, according to subsequent accounts, by the successors of the bishops to prevent pursuit. At length, according to common report, at the time that Prince Henry of Portugal was prosecuting his discoveries, several seafaring men presented themselves one day before him, and stated that they had just returned from a voyage, in the course of which they had landed upon this island. The inhabitants, they said, spoke their language, and carried them immediately to church, to ascertain

whether they were Catholics, and were rejoiced at finding them of the true faith. They then made earnest inquiries, to know whether the Moors still retained possession of Spain and Portugal. While part of the crew were at church, the rest gathered sand on the shore for the use of the kitchen, and found, to their surprise, that one third of it was gold. The islanders were anxious that the crew should remain with them a few days, until the return of their governor, who was absent; but the mariners, afraid of being detained, embarked and made sail. Such was the story they told to Prince Henry, hoping to receive reward for their intelligence. The prince expressed displeasure at their hasty departure from the island, and ordered them to return and procure further information; but the men, apprehensive, no doubt, of having the falsehood of their tale discovered, made their escape, and nothing more was heard of them.*

This story has much currency. The Island of the Seven Cities was identified with the island mentioned by Aristotle as having been discovered by the Carthaginians, and was put down in the early maps about the time of Columbus, under the name of Antilla.

At the time of the discovery of New Spain, reports were brought to Hispaniola of the civilization of the country; that the people wore clothing; that their houses and temples were solid, spacious, and often

* *Hist. del Almirante*, cap 10.

magnificent; and that crosses were occasionally found among them. Juan de Grivalja, being despatched to explore the coast of Yucatan, reported that in sailing along it he beheld, with great wonder, stately and beautiful edifices of lime and stone, and many high towers that shone at a distance.* For a time the old tradition of the Seven Cities was revived, and many thought that they were to be found in the same part of New Spain.

No. XXVII.

DISCOVERY OF THE ISLAND OF MADEIRA.

THE discovery of Madeira by Macham rests principally upon the authority of Francisco Alcaforado, an esquire of Prince Henry of Portugal, who composed an account of it for that prince. It does not appear to have obtained much faith among Portuguese historians. No mention is made of it in Barros; he attributes the first discovery of the island to Juan Gonzalez and Tristram Vaz, who he said descried it from Porto Santo, resembling a cloud on the horizon.†

The Abbé Provost, however, in his *General History of Voyages*, vol. vi., seems inclined to give credit to the account of Alcaforado. "It was composed," he

* *Torquemada Monarquia Indiana*, lib. iv., cap. 4. *Origen de los Indios*, por Fr. Gregorio Garcia, lib. iv., cap. 20.

† Barros' *Asia*, decad. i., lib. i., cap. 3.

observes, "at a time when the attention of the public would have exposed the least falsities; and no one was more capable than Alcaforado of giving an exact detail of this event, since he was of the number of those who assisted at the second discovery." The narrative, as originally written, was overcharged with ornaments and digressions. It was translated into French and published in Paris, in 1671. The French translator has retrenched the ornaments, but scrupulously retained the facts. The story, however, is cherished in the island of Madeira, where a painting in illustration of it is still to be seen. The following is a purport of the French translation. I have not been able to procure the original of Alcaforado.

During the reign of Edward III. of England, a young man of great courage and talent, named Robert Macham, fell in love with a young lady of rare beauty, of the name of Anne Dorset. She was his superior in birth, and of a proud and aristocratic family; but the merit of Macham gained him the preference over all his rivals. The family of the young lady, to prevent her making an inferior alliance, obtained an order from the King to have Macham arrested and confined, until by arbitrary means they married his mistress to a man of quality. As soon as the nuptials were celebrated, the nobleman conducted his beautiful and afflicted bride to his seat near Bristol. Macham was now restored to liberty. Indignant at the wrongs he

had suffered, and certain of the affections of his mistress, he prevailed upon several friends to assist him in a project for the gratification of his love and his revenge. They followed hard on the traces of the newly married couple to Bristol. One of the friends obtained an introduction into the family of the nobleman in quality of a groom. He found the young bride full of tender recollections of her lover, and of dislike to the husband thus forced upon her. Through the means of this friend, Macham had several communications with her, and concerted means for their escape to France, where they might enjoy their mutual love unmolested.

When all things were prepared, the young lady rode out one day, accompanied only by the fictitious groom, under the pretence of taking the air. No sooner were they out of sight of the house, than they galloped to an appointed place on the shore of the channel, where a boat awaited them. They were conveyed on board a vessel, which lay with an anchor atrip and sails unfurled, ready to put to sea. Here the lovers were once more united. Fearful of pursuit, the ship immediately weighed anchor; they made their way rapidly along the coast of Cornwall, and Macham anticipated the triumph of soon landing with his beautiful prize on the shores of gay and gallant France. Unfortunately, an adverse and stormy wind arose in the night; at daybreak they found

themselves out of sight of land. The mariners were ignorant and inexperienced; they knew nothing of the compass, and it was a time when men were unaccustomed to traverse the high seas. For thirteen days the lovers were driven about on a tempestuous ocean, at the mercy of wind and wave. The fugitive bride was filled with terror and remorse, and looked upon this uproar of elements as the anger of heaven directed against her. All the efforts of her lover could not remove from her mind a dismal presage of some approaching catastrophe.

At length the tempest subsided. On the fourteenth day at dawn, the mariners perceived what appeared to be a tuft of wood rising out of the sea. They joyfully steered for it, supposing it to be an island. They were not mistaken. As they drew near, the rising sun shone upon noble forests, the trees of which were of a kind unknown to them. Flights of birds also came hovering about the ship, and perched upon the yards and rigging without any signs of fear. The boat was sent on shore to reconnoitre, and soon returned with such accounts of the beauty of the country, that Macham determined to take his drooping companion to the land, in hopes her health and spirits might be restored by refreshment and repose. They were accompanied on shore by the faithful friends who had assisted in their flight. The mariners remained on board to guard the ship.

The country was indeed delightful. The forests were stately and magnificent; there were trees laden with excellent fruits, others with aromatic flowers; the waters were cool and limpid, the sky was serene, and there was a balmy sweetness in the air. The animals they met with showed no signs of alarm or ferocity, from which they concluded that the island was uninhabited. On penetrating a little distance they found a sheltered meadow, the green bosom of which was bordered by laurels and refreshed by a mountain brook which ran sparkling over pebbles. In the centre was a majestic tree, the wide branches of which afforded shade from the rays of the sun. Here Macham had bowers constructed, and determined to pass a few days, hoping that the sweetness of the country, and the serene tranquillity of this delightful solitude, would recruit the drooping health and spirits of his companion. Three days, however, had scarcely passed, when a violent storm arose from the northeast, and raged all night over the island. On the succeeding morning Macham repaired to the sea-side, but nothing of his ship was to be seen, and he concluded that it had foundered in the tempest.

Consternation fell upon the little band, thus left in an uninhabited island in the midst of the ocean. The blow fell most severely on the timid and repentant bride. She reproached herself with being the cause of all their misfortunes, and, from the first, had been

haunted by dismal forebodings. She now considered them about to be accomplished, and her horror was so great as to deprive her of speech; she expired in three days without uttering a word.

Macham was struck with despair at beholding the tragical end of this tender and beautiful being. He upbraided himself, in the transports of his grief, with tearing her from her home, her country, and her friends, to perish upon a savage coast. All the efforts of his companions to console him were in vain. He died within five days, broken-hearted; begging, as a last request, that his body might be interred beside that of his mistress, at the foot of a rustic altar which they had erected under the great tree. They set up a large wooden cross on the spot, on which was placed an inscription written by Macham himself, relating in a few words his piteous adventure, and praying any Christians who might arrive there, to build a chapel in the place dedicated to Jesus the Saviour.

After the death of their commander, his followers consulted about means to escape from the island. The ship's boat remained on the shore. They repaired it and put it in a state to bear a voyage, and then made sail, intending to return to England. Ignorant of their situation, and carried about by the winds, they were cast upon the coast of Morocco, where, their boat being shattered upon the rocks, they were captured by the Moors and thrown into prison. Here

they understood that their ship had shared the same fate, having been driven from her anchorage in the tempest, and carried to the same inhospitable coast, where all her crew were made prisoners.

The prisons of Morocco were in those days filled with captives of all nations, taken by their cruisers. Here the English prisoners met with an experienced pilot, a Spaniard of Seville, named Juan de Morales. He listened to their story with great interest; inquired into the situation and description of the island they had discovered; and subsequently, on his redemption from prison, communicated the circumstances, it is said, to Prince Henry of Portugal.

There is a difficulty in the above narrative of Alcaforado in reconciling dates. The voyage is said to have taken place during the reign of Edward III., which commenced in 1327 and ended in 1378. Morales to whom the English communicated their voyage, is said to have been in the service of the Portuguese, in the second discovery of Madeira, in 1418 and 1420. Even if the voyage and imprisonment had taken place in the last year of King Edward's reign, this leaves a space of forty years.

Hackluyt gives an account of the same voyage, taken from Antonio Galvano. He varies in certain particulars. It happened, he says, in the year 1344, in the time of Peter IV. of Arragon. Macham cast anchor in a bay, since called after him Machio.

The lady being ill, he took her on shore, accompanied by some of his friends, and the ships sailed without them. After the death of the lady, Macham made a canoe out of a tree, and ventured to sea in it with his companions. They were cast upon the coast of Africa, where the Moors, considering it a kind of miracle, carried him to the king of their country, who sent him to the king of Castile. In consequence of the traditional accounts remaining of this voyage, Henry II. of Castile sent people, in 1395, to rediscover the island.

No. XXVIII.

LAS CASAS.

BARTHOLOMEW LAS CASAS, Bishop of Chiapa, so often cited in all the histories of the New World, was born in Seville, in 1474, and was of French extraction. The family was Casaus. The first of the name who appeared in Spain, served under the standard of Ferdinand III., surnamed The Saint, in his wars with the Moors of Andalusia. He was at the taking of Seville from the Moors, when he was rewarded by the King, and received permission to establish himself there. His descendants enjoyed the prerogatives of nobility, and suppressed the letter *u* in their name, to accommodate it to the Spanish tongue.

Antonio, the father of Bartholomew, went to Hispaniola with Columbus in 1493, and returned rich to

Seville in 1498.* It has been stated by one of the biographers of Bartholomew Las Casas, that he accompanied Columbus in his third voyage in 1498, and returned with him in 1500.† This, however, is incorrect. He was, during that time, completing his education at Salamanca, where he was instructed in Latin, dialectics, logic, metaphysics, ethics, and physics, after the supposed method and system of Aristotle. While at the university, he had as a servant, an Indian slave, given him by his father, who had received him from Columbus. When Isabella, in her transport of virtuous indignation, ordered the Indian slaves to be sent back to their country, this one was taken from Las Casas. The young man was aroused by the circumstance, and on considering the nature of the case, became inflamed with a zeal in favor of the unhappy Indians, which never cooled throughout a long and active life. It was excited to tenfold fervor, when, at about the age of twenty-eight years, he accompanied the commander Ovando to Hispaniola in 1502, and was an eye-witness to many of the cruel scenes which took place under his administration. The whole of his future life, a space exceeding sixty years, was devoted to vindicating the cause, and endeavoring to meliorate the sufferings of the natives. As a missionary he traversed the wilderness of the New World in various directions,

* Navarrete, *Colec. Viag.*, tom. i., Introd., p. lxx.
† T. A. Llorente, *Œuvres de Las Casas*, p. xi., Paris, 1822.

seeking to convert and civilize them; as a protector and champion, he made several voyages to Spain, vindicated their wrongs before courts and monarchs, wrote volumes in their behalf, and exhibited a zeal, and constancy, and intrepidity, worthy of an apostle. He died at the advanced age of ninety-two years, and was buried at Madrid, in the church of the Dominican convent of Atocha, of which fraternity he was a member.

Attempts have been made to decry the consistency, and question the real philanthropy of Las Casas, in consequence of one of the expedients to which he resorted to relieve the Indians from the cruel bondage imposed upon them. This occurred in 1517, when he arrived in Spain, on one of his missions, to obtain measures in their favor from the government. On his arrival in Spain, he found Cardinal Ximenes, who had been left regent on the death of King Ferdinand, too ill to attend to his affairs. He repaired therefore to Valladolid, where he awaited the coming of the new monarch Charles, Archduke of Austria, afterwards the Emperor Charles V. He had strong opponents to encounter in various persons high in authority, who, holding estates and *repartimientos* in the colonies, were interested in the slavery of the Indians. Among these, and not the least animated, was the Bishop Fonseca, president of the council of the Indies.

At length the youthful sovereign arrived, accompanied by various Flemings of his court, particularly his Grand Chancellor, Doctor Juan de Selvagio, a learned and upright man, whom he consulted on all affairs of administration and justice. Las Casas soon became intimate with the Chancellor, and stood high in his esteem; but so much opposition arose on every side that he found his various propositions for the relief of the natives but little attended to. In his doubt and anxiety he had now recourse to an expedient which he considered as justified by the circumstances of the case.* The Chancellor Selvagio and other Flemings who had accompanied the youthful sovereign, had obtained from him before quitting Flanders, licenses to import slaves from Africa to the colonies; a measure which had recently, in 1516, been prohibited by a decree of Cardinal Ximenes while acting as regent. The Chancellor, who was a humane man, reconciled it to his conscience by a popular opinion that one negro could perform, without detriment to his health, the labor of several Indians, and that therefore it was a great saving of human suffering. So easy is it for interest to wrap itself up in plausible argument! He might, moreover, have thought

* Herrera clearly states this as an expedient adopted when others failed: "Bartolomé de Las Casas, viendo que sus conceptos hallaban en todas partes dificultad, i que las opiniones que tenia, por mucha familiaridad que havia seguido i gran credito con el gran Canciller, no podian haber efecto, *se volvio a otros expedientes*," etc.—Decad. ii., lib. ii., cap. 2.

the welfare of the Africans but little affected by the change. They were accustomed to slavery in their own country, and they were said to thrive in the New World. "The Africans," observes Herrera, "prospered so much in the island of Hispaniola, that it was the opinion, unless a negro should happen to be hanged, he would never die; for as yet none had been known to perish from infirmity. Like oranges, they found their proper soil in Hispaniola, and it seemed even more natural to them than their native Guinea."*

Las Casas finding all other means ineffectual, endeavored to turn these interested views of the Grand Chancellor to the benefit of the Indians. He proposed that the Spaniards, resident in the colonies, might be permitted to procure negroes for the labor of the farms and the mines, and other severe toils, which were above the strength and destructive to the lives of the natives. † He evidently considered the poor Africans as little better than mere animals; and he acted like others, on an arithmetical calculation of diminishing human misery, by substituting one strong man for three or four of feebler nature. He, moreover, esteemed the Indians as a nobler and more intellectual race of beings, and their preservation and welfare of higher importance to the general interests of humanity.

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, lib. ii., decad. iii., cap. 4.
† *Ib.*, decad. ii., lib. ii., cap. 23.

It is this expedient of Las Casas which has drawn down severe censure upon his memory. He has been charged with gross inconsistency, and even with having originated this inhuman traffic in the New World. This last is a grievous charge; but historical facts and dates remove the original sin from his door, and prove that the practice existed in the colonies, and was authorized by royal decree, long before he took a part in the question.

Las Casas did not go to the New World until 1502. By a royal ordinance passed in 1501, negro slaves were permitted to be taken there, provided they had been born among Christians.* By a letter written by Ovando, dated 1503, it appears that there were numbers in the island of Hispaniola at that time, and he entreats that no more might be permitted to be brought.

In 1506 the Spanish government forbade the introduction of negro slaves from the Levant, or those brought up with the Moors; and stipulated that none should be taken to the colonies but those from Seville, who had been instructed in the Christian faith, that they might contribute to the conversion of the Indians.† In 1510, King Ferdinand, being informed of the physical weakness of the Indians, ordered fifty Africans to be sent from Seville to labor in the mines.‡

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, d. ii., lib. iii., cap. 8.
† *Idem*, d. i., lib. vi., cap. 20. ‡ *Idem*, d. i., lib. viii., cap. 9.

In 1511, he ordered that a great number should be procured from Guinea, and transported to Hispaniola, understanding that one negro could perform the work of four Indians.* In 1512 and 1513 he signed further orders relative to the same subject. In 1516 Charles V. granted licenses to the Flemings to import negroes to the colonies. It was not until the year 1517, that Las Casas gave his sanction of the traffic. It already existed, and he countenanced it solely with a view to having the hardy Africans substituted for the feeble Indians. It was advocated at the same time, and for the same reasons, by the Jeronimite friars, who were missionaries in the colonies. The motives of Las Casas were purely benevolent, though founded on erroneous notions of justice. He thought to permit evil that good might spring out of it; to choose between two existing abuses, and to eradicate the greater by resorting to the lesser. His reasoning, however fallacious it may be, was considered satisfactory and humane by some of the most learned and benevolent men of the age, among whom was the Cardinal Adrian, afterwards elevated to the papal chair, and characterized by gentleness and humanity. The traffic was permitted; inquiries were made as to the number of slaves required, which was limited to four thousand, and the Flemings obtained a monopoly of the trade, which they afterwards farmed out to the Genoese.

* Herrera, *Hist, Ind.*, d. i., lib. ix., cap. 5.

Dr. Robertson, in noticing the affair, draws a contrast between the conduct of the Cardinal Ximenes and that of Las Casas, strongly to the disadvantage of the latter. "The Cardinal," he observes, "when solicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the proposition, because he perceived the iniquity of reducing one race of men to slavery, when he was consulting about the means of restoring liberty to another; but Las Casas, from the inconsistency natural to men who hurry with headlong impetuosity towards a favorite point, was incapable of making this distinction. In the warmth of his zeal to save the Americans from the yoke, he pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impose one still heavier on the Africans." *

This distribution of praise and censure is not perfectly correct. Las Casas had no idea that he was imposing a heavier, or so heavy, a yoke upon the Africans. The latter were considered more capable of labor, and less impatient of slavery. While the Indians sunk under their tasks, and perished by thousands in Hispaniola, the negroes, on the contrary, thrived there. Herrera, to whom Dr. Robertson refers as his authority, assigns a different motive, and one of mere finance, for the measures of Cardinal Ximenes. He says that he ordered that no one should take negroes to the Indies, because, as the natives were

* Robertson, *Hist. America*, p. 3.

decreasing, and it was known that one negro did more work than four of them, there would probably be a great demand for African slaves, and a tribute might be imposed upon the trade, from which would result profit to the royal treasury.* This measure was presently after carried into effect, though subsequent to the death of the Cardinal, and licenses were granted by the sovereign for pecuniary considerations. Flechier, in his *Life of Ximenes*, assigns another but a mere political motive for this prohibition. The Cardinal, he says, objected to the importation of negroes into the colonies, as he feared they would corrupt the natives, and by confederacies with them render them formidable to government. De Marsolier, another biographer of Ximenes, gives equally politic reasons for this prohibition. He cites a letter written by the Cardinal on the subject, in which he observed that he knew the nature of the negroes; they were a people capable, it was true, of great fatigue, but extremely prolific and enterprising; and that if they had time to multiply in America, they would infallibly revolt, and impose on the Spaniards the same chains which they had compelled them to wear.† These facts, while they

* "Porque como iban faltando los Indios i se conocia que un negro trabajaba mas que quatro, por lo qual habia gran demanda de ellos, parecia que se podia poner algun tributo en la saca, de que resultaria provecho á la Rl. Hacienda."—Herrera, decad. ii., lib. ii., cap. 8.

† De Marsolier, *Hist. du Ministere Cardinal Ximenes*, lib. vi. Toulouse, 1694.

take from the measure of the Cardinal that credit for exclusive philanthropy which has been bestowed upon it, manifest the clear foresight of that able politician, whose predictions with respect to negro revolt have been so strikingly fulfilled in the island of Hispaniola.

Cardinal Ximenes, in fact, though a wise and upright statesman, was not troubled with scruples of conscience on these questions of natural right; nor did he possess more toleration than his contemporaries towards savage and infidel nations. He was grand inquisitor of Spain, and was very efficient during the latter years of Ferdinand in making slaves of the refractory Moors of Granada. He authorized, by express instructions, expeditions to seize and enslave the Indians of the Caribbee Islands, whom he termed only suited to labor, enemies of the Christians, and cannibals. Nor will it be considered a proof of gentle or tolerant policy, that he introduced the tribunal of the inquisition into the New World. These circumstances are cited not to cast reproach upon the character of Cardinal Ximenes, but to show how incorrectly he has been extolled at the expense of Las Casas. Both of them must be judged in connection with the customs and opinions of the age in which they lived.

Las Casas was the author of many works, but few of which have been printed. The most important is a general history of the Indies, from the discovery to the year 1520, in three volumes. It exists only in

manuscript, but is the fountain from which Herrera and most of the other historians of the New World have drawn large supplies. The work though prolix is valuable, as the author was an eye-witness of many of the facts, had others from persons who were concerned in the transactions recorded, and possessed copious documents. It displays great erudition, though somewhat crudely and diffusely introduced. His history was commenced in 1527, at fifty-three years of age, and was finished in 1559, when eighty-five. As many things are set down from memory there is occasional inaccuracy, but the whole bears the stamp of sincerity and truth. The author of the present work, having had access to this valuable manuscript, has made great use of it, drawing forth many curious facts hitherto neglected; but he has endeavored to consult it with caution and discrimination, collating it with other authorities, and omitting whatever appeared to be dictated by prejudice or overheated zeal.

Las Casas has been accused of high coloring and extravagant declamation in those passages which relate to the barbarities practised on the natives; nor is the charge entirely without foundation. The same zeal in the cause of the Indian is expressed in his writings that shone forth in his actions, always pure, often vehement, and occasionally unreasonable. Still, however, where he errs it is on a generous and righteous side. If one tenth part of what he says he "witnessed

with his own eyes" be true, and his veracity is above all doubt, he would have been wanting in the natural feelings of humanity had he not expressed himself in terms of indignation and abhorrence.

In the course of his work, when Las Casas mentions the original papers lying before him, from which he drew many of his facts, it makes one lament that they should be lost to the world. Besides the journals and letters of Columbus, he says he had numbers of the letters of the Adelantado Don Bartholomew, who wrote better than his brother, and whose writings must have been full of energy. Above all, he had the map formed from study and conjecture, by which Columbus sailed on his first voyage. What a precious document would this be for the world! These writings may still exist, neglected and forgotten among the rubbish of some convent in Spain. Little hope can be entertained of discovering them in the present state of degeneracy of the cloister. The monks of Atocha, in a recent conversation with one of the royal princes, betrayed an ignorance that this illustrious man was buried in their convent, nor can any of the fraternity point out his place of sepulture to the stranger.*

The publication of this work of Las Casas has not

* In this notice the author has occasionally availed himself of the interesting memoir of Mon. J. A. Llorente, prefixed to his collection of the works of Las Casas, collating it with the history of Herrera, from which its facts are principally derived.

been permitted in Spain, where every book must have the sanction of a censor before it is committed to the press. The horrible picture it exhibits of the cruelties inflicted on the Indians, would, it was imagined, excite an odium against their conquerors. Las Casas himself seems to have doubted the expediency of publishing it; for in 1560 he made a note with his own hand which is preserved in the two first volumes of the original, mentioning that he left them in confidence to the college of the order of Predicators of St. Gregorio, in Valladolid, begging of its prelates that no secular person, nor even the collegians, should be permitted to read his history for the space of forty years; and that after that term it might be printed if consistent with the good of the Indies and of Spain.*

For the foregoing reason the work has been cautiously used by Spanish historians, passing over in silence, or with brief notice, many passages of disgraceful import. This feeling is natural, if not commendable; for the world is not prompt to discriminate between individuals and the nation of whom they are but a part. The laws and regulations for the government of the newly discovered countries, and the decisions of the Council of the Indies on all contested points, though tinctured in some degree with the bigotry of the age, were distinguished for wisdom, justice, and humanity, and do honor to the Spanish

* Navarrete, *Colec. de Viag.*, tom. i., p. lxxv.

nation. It was only in the abuse of them by individuals to whom the execution of the laws was intrusted, that these atrocities were committed. It should be remembered, also, that the same nation which gave birth to the sanguinary and rapacious adventurers who perpetrated these cruelties, gave birth likewise to the early missionaries, like Las Casas, who followed the sanguinary course of discovery, binding up the wounds inflicted by their countrymen; men who in a truly evangelical spirit braved all kinds of perils and hardships, and even death itself, not through a prospect of temporal gain or glory, but through a desire to meliorate the condition and save the souls of barbarous and suffering nations. The dauntless enterprises and fearful peregrinations of many of these virtuous men, if properly appreciated, would be found to vie in romantic daring with the heroic achievements of chivalry, with motives of a purer and far more exalted nature.

No. XXIX.

PETER MARTYR.

PETER MARTIR, or Martyr, of whose writings much use has been made in this history, was born at Anghierra, in the territory of Milan, in Italy, on the 2d of February, 1455. He is commonly termed Peter Martyr of *Angleria*, from the Latin name of his native

place. He is one of the earliest historians that treat of Columbus, and was his contemporary and intimate acquaintance. Being at Rome in 1487, and having acquired a distinguished reputation for learning, he was invited by the Spanish ambassador, the Count de Tendilla, to accompany him to Spain. He willingly accepted the invitation, and was presented to the sovereigns at Saragossa. Isabella, amidst the cares of the war with Granada, was anxious for the intellectual advancement of her kingdom, and wished to employ Martyr to instruct the young nobility of the royal household. With her peculiar delicacy however she first made her confessor, Hernando de Talavera, inquire of Martyr in what capacity he desired to serve her. Contrary to her expectation, Martyr replied: "In the profession of arms." The Queen complied, and he followed her in her campaigns as one of her household and military suite, but without distinguishing himself, and perhaps without having any particular employ in a capacity so foreign to his talents. After the surrender of Granada, when the war was ended, the Queen, through the medium of the Grand Cardinal of Spain, prevailed upon him to undertake the instruction of the young nobles of her court.

Martyr was acquainted with Columbus while making his application to the sovereigns, and was present at his triumphant reception by Ferdinand and Isabella in Barcelona, on his return from his first voyage. He

was continually in the royal camp during the war with the Moors, of which his letters contain many interesting particulars. He was sent Ambassador Extraordinary by Ferdinand and Isabella, in 1501, to Venice, and thence to the Grand Soldan of Egypt. The Soldan, in 1490 or 1491, had sent an Embassy to the Spanish sovereigns, threatening that, unless they desisted from the war against Granada, he would put all the Christians in Egypt and Syria to death, overturn all their temples, and destroy the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Ferdinand and Isabella pressed the war with tenfold energy, and brought it to a triumphant conclusion in the next campaign, while the Soldan was still carrying on a similar negotiation with the Pope. They afterwards sent Peter Martyr ambassador to the Soldan to explain and justify their measure. Martyr discharged the duties of his embassy with great ability ; obtained permission from the Soldan to repair the holy places at Jerusalem, and an abolition of various extortions to which Christian pilgrims had been subjected. While on this embassy he wrote his work *De Legatione Babylonica*, which includes a history of Egypt in those times.

On his return to Spain he was rewarded with places and pensions, and in 1524 was appointed a minister of the Council of the Indies. His principal work is an account of the discoveries of the New World, in eight decades, each containing ten chapters. They

are styled *Decades of the New World*, or *Decades of the Ocean*, and, like all his other works, were originally written in Latin, though since translated into various languages. He had familiar access to letters, papers, journals, and narratives of the early discoverers, and was personally acquainted with many of them, gathering particulars from their conversation. In writing his *Decades*, he took great pains to obtain information from Columbus himself, and from others, his companions.

In one of his epistles (No. 153, January, 1494, to Pomponius Lætus) he mentions having just received a letter from Columbus, by which it appears he was in correspondence with him. Las Casas says that great credit is to be given to him in regard to those voyages of Columbus, although his *Decades* contain some inaccuracies relative to some events in the Indies. Muñoz allows him great credit, as an author contemporary with his subject, grave, well cultivated, instructed in the facts of which he treats, and of entire probity. He observes however that his writings being composed on the spur or excitement of the moment, often related circumstances which subsequently proved to be erroneous; that they were written without method or care, often confusing dates and events, so that they must be read with some caution.

Martyr was in the daily habit of writing letters to distinguished persons, relating the passing occurrences

of the busy court and age in which he lived. In several of these Columbus is mentioned, and also some of the chief events of his voyages, as promulgated at the very moment of his return. These letters, not being generally known or circulated, or frequently cited, it may be satisfactory to the reader to have a few of the main passages which relate to Columbus. They have a striking effect in carrying us back to the very time of the discoveries.

In one of his epistles, dated Barcelona, May 1, 1493, and addressed to C. Borromeo, he says: "Within these last few days a certain Christopher Columbus has arrived from the western antipodes; a man of Liguria, whom my sovereigns reluctantly intrusted with three ships, to seek that region, for they thought that what he said was fabulous. He has returned and brought specimens of many precious things, but particularly gold, which those countries naturally produce." *

In another letter, dated likewise from Barcelona, in September following, he gives a more particular account. It is addressed to Count Tendilla, Governor of Granada, and also to Hernando Talavera, Archbishop of that diocese, and the same to whom the propositions of Columbus had been referred by the Spanish sovereigns. "Arouse your attention, ancient sages," says Peter Martyr in his epistle; "listen to

* *Opus Epist. P. Martyris Anglerii*, Epist. 131.

a new discovery. You remember Columbus the Ligurian, appointed in the camp by our sovereigns to search for a new hemisphere of land at the western antipodes. You ought to recollect, for you had some agency in the transaction; nor would the enterprise, as I think, have been undertaken, without your counsel. He has returned in safety, and relates the wonders he has discovered. He exhibits gold as proofs of the mines in those regions; Gossampine cotton, also, and aromatics, and pepper more pungent than that from Caucasus. All these things, together with scarlet dye-woods, the earth produces spontaneously. Pursuing the western sun from Gades five thousand miles, of each a thousand paces, as he relates, he fell in with sundry islands, and took possession of one of them, of greater circuit, he asserts, than the whole of Spain. Here he found a race of men living contented, in a state of nature, subsisting on fruits and vegetables, and bread formed from roots. . . . These people have kings, some greater than others, and they war occasionally among themselves, with bows and arrows, or lances sharpened and hardened in the fire. The desire of command prevails among them, though they are naked. They have wives also. What they worship, except the divinity of heaven, is not ascertained." *

In another letter, dated likewise in September, 1493,

* *Idem*, Epist. 134.

and addressed to the Cardinal and Vice-Chancellor Ascanius Sforza, he says :

"So great is my desire to give you satisfaction, illustrious prince, that I consider it a gratifying occurrence in the great fluctuation of events, when anything takes place among us, in which you may take an interest. The wonders of this terrestrial globe, round which the sun makes a circuit in the space of four and twenty hours, have, until our time, as you are well aware, been known only in regard to one hemisphere, merely from the Golden Chersonesus to our Spanish Gades. The rest has been given up as unknown by cosmographers, and if any mention has been made, it has been slight and dubious. But now, O blessed enterprise ! under the auspices of our sovereigns, what has hitherto lain hidden since the first origin of things, has at length begun to be developed. The thing has thus occurred—attend, illustrious prince ! A certain Christopher Columbus, a Ligurian despatched to those regions with three vessels by my sovereigns, pursuing the western sun above five thousand miles from Gades, achieved his way to the antipodes. Three and thirty successive days they navigated with naught but sky and water. At length from the mast-head of the largest vessel, in which Columbus himself sailed, those on the lookout proclaimed the sight of land. He coasted along six islands, one of them, as all his followers declare, beguiled

perchance by the novelty of the scene, is larger than Spain."

Martyr proceeds to give the usual account of the productions of the islands, and the manners and customs of the natives, particularly the wars which occurred among them; "as if *meum* and *tuum* had been introduced among them as among us, and inexpensive luxuries, and the desire of accumulating wealth; for what, you will think, can be the wants of naked men?" "What further may succeed," he adds, "I will hereafter signify. Farewell." *

In another letter, dated Valladolid, February 1, 1494, to Hernando de Talavera, Archbishop of Granada, he observes: "The King and Queen, on the return of Columbus to Barcelona, from his honorable enterprise, appointed him admiral of the ocean sea, and caused him, on account of his illustrious deeds, to be seated in their presence, an honor and a favor, as you know, the highest with our sovereigns. They have despatched him again to those regions, furnished with a fleet of eighteen ships. There is prospect of great discoveries at the western antarctic antipodes." †

In a subsequent letter to Pomponius Lætus, dated from Alcala de Henares, December 9, 1494, he gives the first news of the success of this expedition.

* *Opus Epist. P. Martyris Anglerii*, Epist. 135.
† *Idem*, Epist. 141.

"Spain," says he, "is spreading her wings, augmenting her empire, and extending her name and glory to the antipodes. . . . Of eighteen vessels despatched by my sovereigns with the Admiral Columbus on his second voyage to the western hemisphere, twelve have returned and have brought Gossampine cotton, huge trees of dye-wood, and many other articles held with us as precious, the natural productions of this hitherto hidden world; and besides all other things, no small quantity of gold. O wonderful Pomponius! Upon the surface of that earth are found rude masses of native gold, of a weight that one is afraid to mention. Some weigh two hundred and fifty ounces, and they hope to discover others of a much larger size, from what the naked natives intimate, when they extol their gold to our people. Nor are the Lestrigonians nor Polyphemi, who feed on human flesh, any longer doubtful. Attend—but beware! lest they rise in horror before thee! When he proceeded from the Fortunate Islands, now termed the Canaries, to Hispaniola, the island on which we first set foot, turning his prow a little toward the south, he arrived at innumerable islands of savage men, whom they call cannibals, or Caribbees; and these, though naked, are courageous warriors. They fight skilfully with bows and clubs, and have boats hollowed from a single tree, yet very capacious, in which they make fierce descents on neighboring isl-

ands, inhabited by milder people. They attack their villages, from which they carry off the men and devour them," etc.*

Another letter to Pomponius Lætus, on the same subject, has been cited at large in the body of this work. It is true these extracts give nothing that has not been stated more at large in the *Decades* of the same author, but they are curious, as the very first announcements of the discoveries of Columbus, and as showing the first stamp of these extraordinary events upon the mind of one of the most learned and liberal men of the age.

A collection of the letters of Peter Martyr was published in 1530, under the title of *Opus Epistolarum, Petri Martyris Anglerii;* it is divided into thirty-eight books, each containing the letters of one year. The same objections have been made to his letters as to his *Decades*, but they bear the same stamp of candor, probity, and great information. They possess peculiar value from being written at the moment, before the facts they record were distorted or discolored by prejudice or misrepresentation. His works abound in interesting particulars not to be found in any contemporary historian. They are rich in thought, but still richer in fact, and are full of urbanity, and of the liberal feeling of a scholar who has mingled with the world. He is a fountain from which others draw, and

* *Opus Epist. P. Martyris Anglerii*, Epist. 147.

from which, with a little precaution, they may draw securely. He died in Valladolid, in 1526.

No. XXX.

OVIEDO.

GONZALO FERNANDEZ DE OVIEDO Y VALDES, commonly known as Oviedo, was born in Madrid in 1478, and died in Valladolid in 1557, aged seventy-nine years. He was of a noble Asturian family and in his boyhood (in 1490) was appointed one of the pages to Prince Juan, heir-apparent of Spain, the only son of Ferdinand and Isabella. He was in this situation at the time of the siege and surrender of Granada, was consequently at court at the time that Columbus made his agreement with the Catholic sovereigns, and was in the same capacity at Barcelona, and witnessed the triumphant entrance of the discoverer, attended by a number of the natives of the newly found countries.

In 1513, he was sent out to the New World by Ferdinand, to superintend the gold foundries. For many years he served there in various offices of trust and dignity, both under Ferdinand, and his grandson and successor Charles V. In 1535, he was made *alcayde* of the fortress of St. Domingo in Hispaniola, and afterwards was appointed historiographer of the Indies. At the time of his death, he had served the Crown upwards of forty years, thirty-four of which

were passed in the colonies, and he had crossed the ocean eight times, as he mentions in various parts of his writings. He wrote several works; the most important is a chronicle of the Indies in fifty books, divided into three parts. The first part, containing nineteen books, was printed at Seville in 1535, and reprinted in 1547 at Salamanca, augmented by a twentieth book containing shipwrecks. The remainder of the work exists in manuscript. The printing of it was commenced at Valladolid in 1557, but was discontinued in consequence of his death. It is one of the unpublished treasures of Spanish colonial history.

He was an indefatigable writer, laborious in collecting and recording facts, and composed a multitude of volumes which are scattered through the Spanish libraries. His writings are full of events which happened under his own eye, or were communicated to him by eye-witnesses; but he was deficient in judgment and discrimination. He took his facts without caution and often from sources unworthy of credit. In his account of the first voyage of Columbus, he fell into several egregious errors, in consequence of taking the verbal information of a pilot named Hernan Perez Matteo, who was in the interest of the Pinzons, and adverse to the Admiral. His word is not much to be depended upon in matters relative to Columbus. When he treats of a more advanced period of the New World, from his own actual obser-

vation, he is much more satisfactory though he is accused of listening too readily to popular fables and misrepresentations. His account of the natural productions of the New World, and of the customs of its inhabitants, is full of curious particulars; and the best narratives of some of the minor voyages which succeeded those of Columbus, are to be found in the unpublished part of his work.

No. XXXI.

CURA DE LOS PALACIOS.

ANDRES BERNALDES, or Bernal, generally known by the title of the Curate of Los Palacios, from having been curate of the town of Los Palacios from about 1488 to 1513, was born in the town of Fuentes, and was for some time chaplain to Diego Deza, Archbishop of Seville, one of the greatest friends to the application of Columbus. Bernaldes was well acquainted with the Admiral, who was occasionally his guest, and in 1496, left many of his manuscripts and journals with him, which the Curate made use of in a history of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, in which he introduced an account of the voyages of Columbus. In his narrative of the Admiral's coasting along the southern side of Cuba, the Curate is more minute and accurate than any other historian.

His work exists only in manuscript, but is well known to historians, who have made frequent use of it. Nothing can be more simple and artless than the account which the honest Curate gives of his being first moved to undertake his chronicle. "I who wrote these chapters of memoirs," he says, "being for twelve years in the habit of reading a register of my deceased grandfather, who was notary public of the town of Fuentes, where I was born, I found therein several chapters recording certain events and achievements which had taken place in his time; and my grandmother, his widow, who was very old, hearing me read them said to me, 'And thou, my son, since thou art not slothful in writing, why dost thou not write, in this manner, the good things which are happening at present in thy own day, that those who come hereafter may know them, and marvelling at what they read may render thanks to God.'

"From that time," continued he, "I proposed to do so, and as I considered the matter I said often to myself, 'If God gives me life and health I will continue to write until I behold the kingdom of Granada gained by the Christians;' and I always entertained a hope of seeing it, and did see it: great thanks and praises be given to our Saviour Jesus Christ! And because it was impossible to write a complete and connected account of all things that happened in Spain, during the matrimonial union of the King Don Fer-

dinand, and the Queen Doña Isabella, I wrote only about certain of the most striking and remarkable events, of which I had correct information, and of those which I saw or which were public and notorious to all men." *

The work of the worthy Curate, as may be inferred from the foregoing statement, is deficient in regularity of plan; the style is artless and often inelegant, but it abounds in facts not to be met with elsewhere, often given in a very graphical manner, and strongly characteristic of the times. As he was contemporary with the events and familiar with many of the persons of his history, and as he was a man of probity and void of all pretensions, his manuscript is a document of high authenticity. He was much respected in the limited sphere in which he moved, "yet," says one of his admirers who wrote a short preface to his chronicle, "he had no other reward than that of the curacy of Los Palacios and the place of chaplain to the Archbishop Don Diego Deza."

In the possession of O. Rich, Esq., of Madrid, is a very curious manuscript chronicle of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella already quoted in this work, made up from this history of the Curate of Los Palacios, and from various other historians of the times by some contemporary writer. In his account of the voyage of Columbus he differs in some trivial particu-

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 7.

lars from the regular copy of the manuscript of the Curate. These variations have been carefully examined by the author of this work and wherever they appear to be for the better have been adopted.

No. XXXII.

"NAVIGATIONE DEL RE DE CASTIGLIA DELLE ISOLE E PAESE NUOVAMENTE RITROVATE."

"NAVIGATIO CHRISTOPHORI COLOMBI."

THE above are the titles, in Italian and in Latin, of the earliest narratives of the first and second voyages of Columbus that appeared in print. It was anonymous; and there are some curious particulars in regard to it. It was originally written in Italian by Montalbodo Fracanzo, or Fracanzano, or by Francapano de Montabaldo, (for writers differ in regard to the name,) and was published in Vicenza, in 1507, in a collection of voyages, entitled *Mondo Novo, e Paese Nuovamente Ritrovate.* The collection was republished at Milan, in 1508, in both Italian, and in a Latin translation made by Archangelo Madrignano, under the title of *Itinerarium Portugallensium;* this title being given, because the work related chiefly to the voyages of Luigi Cadamosto, a Venetian in the service of Portugal.

The collection was afterward augmented by Simon Grinæus with other travels, and printed in Latin at Basle, in 1533,* by Hervagio, entitled *Novus Orbis Regionum*, etc. The edition of Basle, 1555, and the Italian edition of Milan, in 1508, have been consulted in the course of this work.

Peter Martyr (decad. ii., cap. 7) alludes to this publication, under the first Latin title of the book, *Itinerarium Portugallensium*, and accuses the author, whom by mistake he terms Cadamosto, of having stolen the materials of his book from the three first chapters of his first *Decade of the Ocean*, of which, he says, he granted copies in manuscript to several persons, and in particular to certain Venetian ambassadors. Martyrs' *Decades* were not published until 1516, excepting the first three, which were published in 1511, at Seville.

This narrative of the voyages of Columbus is referred to by Gio. Baptista Spotorno, in his historical memoir of Columbus, as having been written by a companion of Columbus.

It is manifest, from a perusal of the narrative, that though the author may have helped himself freely from the manuscript of Martyr, he must have had other sources of information. His description of the person of Columbus as a man tall of stature and large of frame, of a ruddy complexion and oblong visage, is not copied from Martyr, nor from any other writer.

* *Bibliotheca Pinello.*

No historian had, indeed, preceded him, except Sabellicus, in 1504; and the portrait agrees with that subsequently given of Columbus in the biography written by his son.

It is probable that this narrative, which appeared only a year after the death of Columbus, was a piece of literary job-work, written for the collection of voyages published at Vicenza; and that the materials were taken from oral communication, from the account given by Sabellicus, and particularly from the manuscript copy of Martyr's first decade.

No. XXXIII.

ANTONIO DE HERRERA.

ANTONIO HERRERA DE TORDESILLAS, one of the authors most frequently cited in this work, was born in 1565, of Roderick Tordesillas and Agnes de Herrera, his wife. He received an excellent education, and entered into the employ of Vespasian Gonzago, brother to the Duke of Mantau, who was viceroy of Naples for Philip II. of Spain. He was for some time secretary to this statesman, and intrusted with all his secrets. He was afterwards Grand Historiographer of the Indies to Philip II., who added to that title a large pension. He wrote various books, but the most celebrated is a *General History of the Indies,* or

American Colonies, in four volumes, containing eight decades. When he undertook this work, all the public archives were thrown open to him, and he had access to documents of all kinds. He has been charged with great precipitation in the production of his two first volumes, and with negligence in not making sufficient use of the indisputable sources of information thus placed within his reach. The fact was, that he met with historical tracts lying in manuscript, which embraced a great part of the first discoveries, and he contented himself with stating events as he found them therein recorded. It is certain that a great part of his work is little more than a transcript of the manuscript history of the Indies by Las Casas, sometimes reducing and improving the language when timid; omitting the impassioned sallies of the zealous father, when the wrongs of the Indians were in question; and suppressing various circumstances degrading to the character of the Spanish discoverers. The author of the present work has, therefore, frequently put aside the history of Herrera, and consulted the source of his information, the manuscript history of Las Casas.

Muñoz observes, that "in general Herrera did little more than join together morsels and extracts, taken from various parts, in the way that a writer arranges chronologically the materials from which he intends to compose a history"; he adds, that "had not Her-

rera been a learned and judicious man, the precipitation with which he put together those materials would have led to innumerable errors." The remark is just; yet it is to be considered, that to select and arrange such materials judiciously and treat them learnedly, was no trifling merit in the historian.

Herrera has been accused also of flattering his nation; exalting the deeds of his countrymen, and softening and concealing their excesses. There is nothing very serious in this accusation. To illustrate the glory of his nation is one of the noblest offices of the historian; and it is difficult to speak too highly of the extraordinary enterprises and splendid actions of the Spaniards in those days. In softening their excesses he fell into an amiable and pardonable error, if it were indeed an error for a Spanish writer to endeavor to sink them in oblivion.

Vossius passes a high eulogium on Herrera. "No one," he says, "has described with greater industry and fidelity the magnitude and boundaries of provinces, the tracts of sea, positions of capes and islands, of ports and harbors, the windings of rivers and dimensions of lakes; the situation and peculiarities of regions, with the appearance of the heavens, and the designation of places suitable for the establishment of cities." He has been called among the Spaniards the Prince of the Historians of America, and it is added that none have risen since his time capable of

disputing with him that title. Much of this praise will appear exaggerated by such as examine the manuscript histories from which he transferred chapters and entire books, with very little alteration, to his volumes; and a greater part of the eulogiums passed on him for his work on the Indies will be found really due to Las Casas, who has too long been eclipsed by his copyist. Still Herrera has left voluminous proofs of industrious research, extensive information, and great literary talent. His works bear the mark of candor, integrity, and a sincere desire to record the truth.

He died in 1625, at sixty years of age, after having obtained from Philip IV. the promise of the first charge of secretary of state that should become vacant.

No. XXXIV.

BISHOP FONSECA.

THE singular malevolence by Bishop Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca towards Columbus and his family, and which was one of the secret and principal causes of their misfortunes, has been frequently noticed in the course of this work. It originated, as has been shown, in some dispute between the Admiral and Fonseca at Seville in 1493, on account of the delay in fitting out the armament for the second voyage, and in regard to

the number of domestics to form the household of the Admiral. Fonseca received a letter from the sovereigns, tacitly reproving him, and ordering him to show all possible attention to the wishes of Columbus, and to see that he was treated with honor and deference. Fonseca never forgot this affront, and, what with him was the same thing, never forgave it. His spirit appears to have been of that unhealthy kind which has none of the balm of forgiveness, and in which a wound once made forever rankles. The hostility thus produced continued with increasing virulence throughout the life of Columbus, and at his death was transferred to his son and successor. This persevering animosity has been illustrated in the course of this work by facts and observations cited from authors, some of them contemporary with Fonseca, but who were apparently restrained by motives of prudence from giving full vent to the indignation which they evidently felt. Even at the present day, a Spanish historian would be cautious of expressing his feelings freely on the subject, lest they should prejudice his work in the eyes of the ecclesiastical censors of the press. In this way, Bishop Fonseca has in a great measure escaped the general odium his conduct merited.

This prelate had the chief superintendence of Spanish colonial affairs, both under Ferdinand and Isabella and the Emperor Charles V. He was an active and

intrepid, but selfish, overbearing, and perfidious man. His administration bears no marks of enlarged and liberal policy, but is full of traits of arrogance and meanness. He opposed the benevolent attempts of Las Casas to ameliorate the condition of the Indians, and to obtain the abolition of *repartimientos;* treating him with personal haughtiness and asperity.* The reason assigned is that Fonseca was enriching himself by those very abuses, retaining large numbers of the miserable Indians in slavery to work on his possessions in the colonies.

To show that his character has not been judged with undue severity, it is expedient to point out his invidious and persecuting conduct towards Hernando Cortez. The Bishop, while ready to foster rambling adventurers who came forward under his patronage, had never the head or the heart to appreciate the merits of illustrious commanders like Columbus and Cortez.

At a time when disputes arose between Cortez and Diego Velazquez, Governor of Cuba, and the latter sought to arrest the conqueror of Mexico in the midst of his brilliant career, Fonseca, with entire disregard of the merits of the case, took a decided part in favor of Velazquez. Personal interest was at the bottom of this favor; for a marriage was negotiating between Velazquez and a sister of the Bishop.† Complaints

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. ii., lib. ii., cap. 3.
† *Idem*, Herrera, decad. iii., lib. iv., cap. 3.

and misrepresentations had been sent to Spain by Velazquez of the conduct of Cortez, who was represented as a lawless and unprincipled adventurer, attempting to usurp absolute authority in New Spain. The true services of Cortez had already excited admiration at court, but such was the influence of Fonseca, that, as in the case of Columbus, he succeeded in prejudicing the mind of the sovereign against one of the most meritorious of his subjects. One Christoval de Tapia, a man destitute of talent or character, but whose greatest recommendation was his having been in the employ of the Bishop,* was invested with powers similar to those once given to Bobadilla to the prejudice of Columbus. He was to inquire into the conduct of Cortez, and in case he thought fit, to seize him, sequestrate his property, and supersede him in command. Not content with the regular official letters furnished to Tapia, the Bishop, shortly after his departure, sent out Juan Bono de Quexo with blank letters signed by his own hand, and with others directed to various persons, charging them to admit Tapia for governor, and assuring them that the King considered the conduct of Cortez as disloyal. Nothing but the sagacity and firmness of Cortez prevented this measure from completely interrupting, if not defeating his enterprises; and he afterwards declared, that he had experienced more trouble and difficulty

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. iii., lib. i., cap 15.

from the menaces and affronts of the ministers of the King than it cost him to conquer Mexico.*

When the dispute between Cortez and Velazquez came to be decided upon in Spain, in 1522, the father of Cortez, and those who had come from New Spain as his procurators, obtained permission from Cardinal Adrian, at that time governor of the realm, to prosecute a public accusation of the Bishop. A regular investigation took place before the Council of the Indies of their allegations against its president. They charged him with having publicly declared Cortez a traitor and a rebel; with having intercepted and suppressed his letters addressed to the King, keeping His Majesty in ignorance of their contents and of the important services he had performed, while he diligently forwarded all letters calculated to promote the interests of Velazquez; with having prevented the representations of Cortez from being heard in the Council of the Indies, declaring that they should never be heard there while he lived; with having interdicted the forwarding of arms, merchandise, and reinforcements to New Spain; and with having issued orders to the office of the India House at Seville to arrest the procurators of Cortez and all persons arriving from him, and to seize and detain all gold that they should bring. These and various other charges of similar nature were dispassionately investigated. Enough

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. iii., lib. iv., cap. 3.

were substantiated to convict Fonseca of the most partial, oppressive, and perfidious conduct, and the Cardinal consequently forbade him to interfere in the cause between Cortez and Velazquez, and revoked all the orders which the Bishop had issued in the matter, to the India House of Seville. Indeed, Salazar, a Spanish historian, says that Fonseca was totally divested of his authority as president of the council, and of all control of the affairs of New Spain, and adds that he was so mortified at the blow, that it brought on a fit of illness, which well-nigh cost him his life.*

The suit between Cortez and Velazquez was referred to a special tribunal, composed of the Grand Chancellor and other persons of note, and was decided in 1522. The influence and intrigues of Fonseca being no longer of avail, a triumphant verdict was given in favor of Cortez, which was afterwards confirmed by the Emperor Charles V., and additional honors awarded him. This was another blow to the malignant Fonseca, who retained his enmity against Cortez until his last moment, rendered still more rancorous by mortification and disappointment.

A charge against Fonseca, of a still darker nature than any of the preceding, may be found lurking in the pages of Herrera, though so obscure as to have escaped the notice of succeeding historians. He

* Salazar, *Conq. de Mexico*, lib. i., cap. 2.

points to the Bishop as the instigator of a desperate and perfidious man, who conspired against the life of Hernando Cortez. This was one Antonio de Villafaña, who fomented a conspiracy to assassinate Cortez, and elect Francisco Verdujo, brother-in-law of Velazquez, in his place. While the conspirators were waiting for an opportunity to poniard Cortez, one of them relenting, apprised him of his danger. Villafaña was arrested. He attempted to swallow a paper containing a list of the conspirators, but being seized by the throat, a part of it was forced from his mouth, containing fourteen names of persons of importance. Villafaña confessed his guilt, but tortures could not make him inculpate the persons whose names were on the list, who he declared were ignorant of the plot. He was hanged by order of Cortez.*

In the investigation of the disputes between Cortez and Velazquez, this execution of Villafaña was magnified into a cruel and wanton act of power; and in their eagerness to criminate Cortez the witnesses on the part of Alvarez declared that Villafaña had been instigated to what he had done by letters from Bishop Fonseca! *(Que se movió a lo que hizo con cartas del obispo de Burgos †).* It is not probable that Fonseca had recommended assassination, but it shows the character of his agents, and what must have been the

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.*, decad. iii., lib., i., cap. 1.
† *Idem*, decad. iii., lib. iv., cap. 3.

malignant nature of his instructions, when these men thought that such an act would accomplish his wishes.

Fonseca died at Burgos on the 4th of November, 1554, and was interred at Coca.

No. XXXV.

OF THE SITUATION OF THE TERRESTRIAL PARADISE.

THE speculations of Columbus on the situation of the terrestrial paradise, extravagant as they may appear, were such as have occupied many grave and learned men. A slight notice of their opinions on this curious subject may be acceptable to the general reader, and may take from the apparent wildness of the ideas expressed by Columbus.

The abode of our first parents was anciently the subject of anxious inquiry; and indeed mankind have always been prone to picture some place of perfect felicity, where the imagination, disappointed in the coarse realities of life, might revel in an Elysium of its own creation. It is an idea not confined to our religion, but is found in the rude creeds of the most savage nations, and it prevailed generally among the ancients. The speculations concerning the situation of the Garden of Eden, resemble those of the Greeks concerning the Garden of the Hesperides; that region of delight, which they forever placed at the most re-

mote verge of the known world; which their poets established with all the charms of fiction; after which they were continually longing, and which they could never find. At one time it was in the Grand Oasis of Arabia. The exhausted travellers, after traversing the parched and sultry desert, hailed this verdant spot with rapture; they refreshed themselves under its shady bowers, and beside its cooling streams, as the crew of a tempest-tost vessel repose on the shores of some green island in the deep; and from its being thus isolated in the midst of an ocean of sand, they gave it the name of the Island of the Blessed. As geographical knowledge increased, the situation of the Hesperian Gardens was continually removed to a greater distance. It was transferred to the borders of the great Syrtis, in the neighborhood of Mount Atlas. Here, after traversing the frightful deserts of Barca, the traveller found himself in a fair and fertile country, watered by rivulets and gushing fountains. The oranges and citrons transported hence to Greece, where they were as yet unknown, delighted the Athenians by their golden beauty and delicious flavor, and they thought that none but the garden of the Hesperides could produce such glorious fruits. In this way the happy region of the ancients was transported from place to place, still in the remote and obscure extremity of the world, until it was fabled to exist in the Canaries, thence called the Fortunate, or the Hesperian

Islands. Here it remained, because discovery advanced no farther, and because these islands were so distant, and so little known, as to allow full latitude to the fictions of the poet.*

In like manner the situation of the terrestrial paradise, or Garden of Eden, was long a subject of earnest inquiry and curious disputation, and occupied the laborious attention of the most learned theologians. Some placed it in Palestine or the Holy Land; others in Mesopotamia, in that rich and beautiful tract of country embraced by the wanderings of the Tigris and the Euphrates; others in Armenia, in a valley surrounded by precipitous and inaccessible mountains, and imagined that Enoch and Elijah were transported thither, out of the sight of mortals, to live in a state of terrestrial bliss until the second coming of our Saviour. There were others who gave it situations widely remote, such as in the Trapoban of the ancients, at present known as the island of Ceylon; or in the island of Sumatra; or in the Fortunate or Canary Islands; or in one of the islands of Sunda; or in some favored spot under the equinoctial line.

Great difficulty was encountered by these speculators to reconcile the allotted place with the description given in Genesis of the Garden of Eden, particularly of the great fountain which watered it, and which afterwards divided itself into four rivers, the Pison or

* Gosselin, *Recherches sur la Geog. des Anciens*, tom. i.

Phison, the Gihon, the Euphrates, and the Hiddekel. Those who were in favor of the Holy Land supposed that the Jordan was the great river which afterwards divided itself into the Phison, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates, but that the sands have choked up the ancient beds by which these streams were supplied; that originally the Phison traversed Arabia Deserta and Arabia Felix, whence it pursued its course to the Gulf of Persia; that the Gihon bathed northern or stony Arabia, and fell into the Arabian Gulf or the Red Sea; that the Euphrates and the Tigris passed by Eden to Assyria and Chaldea, whence they discharged themselves into the Persian Gulf.

By most of the early commentators the river Gihon is supposed to be the Nile. The source of this river was unknown, but was evidently far distant from the spots whence the Tigris and the Euphrates arose. This difficulty, however, was ingeniously overcome by giving it a subterranean course of some hundreds of leagues from the common fountain, until it issued forth to daylight in Abyssinia.* In like manner, subterranean courses were given to the Tigris and the Euphrates, passing under the Red Sea, until they sprang forth in Armenia, as if just issuing from one common source. So also those who placed the terrestrial paradise in islands, supposed that the rivers which issued from it, and formed those heretofore named,

* Feyjoo, *Theatro Critico*, lib. vii., sec. 2.

either traversed the surface of the sea, as fresh water, by its greater lightness, may float above the salt; or that they flowed through deep veins and channels of the earth, as the Fountain of Arethusa was said to sink into the ground in Greece, and rise in the island of Sicily, while the river Alpheus pursuing it, but with less perseverance, rose somewhat short of it in the sea.

Some contended the Deluge had destroyed the Garden of Eden, and altered the whole face of the earth, so that the rivers had changed their beds, and had taken different directions from those mentioned in Genesis; others however, amongst whom was St. Augustine, in his commentary upon the book of Genesis, maintained that the terrestrial paradise still existed, with its original beauty and delights, but that it was inaccessible to mortals, being on the summit of a mountain of stupendous height, reaching into the third region of the air, and approaching the moon; being thus protected by its elevation from the ravages of the Deluge.

By some this mountain was placed under the equinoctial line; or under that band of the heavens metaphorically called by the ancients "the table of the sun," * comprising the space between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, beyond which the sun never passed in his annual course. Here would reign a uniformity of nights and days and seasons, and the

* Herod., lib. iii.; Virg., *Georg.*, i.; Pomp. Mela, lib. iii., cap. 10.

elevation of the mountain would raise it above the heats and storms of the lower regions. Others transported the Garden beyond the equinoctial line, and placed it in the southern hemisphere, supposing that the torrid zone might be the flaming sword appointed to defend its entrance against mortals. They had a fanciful train of argument to support their theory. They observed that the terrestrial paradise must be in the noblest and happiest part of the globe; that part must be under the noblest part of the heavens, as the merits of a place do not so much depend upon the virtues of the earth as upon the happy influences of the stars and the favorable and benign aspect of the heavens. Now, according to philosophers, the world was divided into two hemispheres. The southern they considered the head, and the northern the feet or under part; the right hand the east, whence commenced the movement of the *primum mobile*, and the left the west, towards which it moved. This supposed, they observed that as it was manifest that the head of all things, natural and artificial, is always the best and noblest part, governing the other parts of the body, so the south, being the head of the earth, ought to be superior and nobler than either east, or west, or north; and in accordance with this, they cited the opinion of various philosophers among the ancients, and more especially that of Ptolemy, that the stars of the southern hemisphere were larger, more resplen-

dent, more perfect, and of course of greater virtue and efficacy than those of the northern—an error universally prevalent until disproved by modern discovery. Hence they concluded that in this southern hemisphere, in this head of the earth, under this purer and brighter sky, and these more potent and benignant stars, was placed the terrestrial paradise.

Various ideas were entertained as to the magnitude of this blissful region. As Adam and all his progeny were to have lived there had he not sinned, and as there would have been no such thing as death to thin the number of mankind, it was inferred that the terrestrial paradise must be of great extent to contain them. Some gave it a size equal to Europe or Africa; others gave it the whole southern hemisphere. St. Augustine supposed that as mankind multiplied, numbers would be translated without death to heaven; the parents, perhaps, when their children had arrived at mature age; or portions of the human race at the end of certain periods and when the population of the terrestrial paradise had attained a certain amount. * Others supposed that mankind, remaining in a state of primitive innocence, would not have required so much space as at present. Having no need of rearing animals for subsistence no land would have been required for pasturage; and the earth not being cursed with sterility, there would have been no need of exten-

* St. August., lib. ix., cap. 6. Sup. Genesis.

sive tracts of country to permit of fallow land and the alternation of crops required in husbandry. The spontaneous and never-failing fruits of the garden would have been abundant for the simple wants of man. Still, that the human race might not be crowded, but might have ample space for recreation and enjoyment, and the charms of variety and change, some allowed at least a hundred leagues of circumference to the garden.

St. Basilius in his eloquent discourse on paradise * expatiates with rapture on the joys of this sacred abode, elevated to the third region of the air, and under the happiest skies. There a pure and never-failing pleasure is furnished to every sense. The eye delights in the admirable clearness of the atmosphere, in the verdure and beauty of the trees, and the never-withering bloom of the flowers. The ear is regaled with the singing of the birds, the smell with the aromatic odors of the land. In like manner the other senses have each their peculiar enjoyments. There the vicissitudes of the seasons are unknown and the climate unites the fruitfulness of summer, the joyful abundance of autumn, and the sweet freshness and quietude of spring. There the earth is always green, the flowers are ever blooming, the waters limpid and

* "St. Basilius was called the great. His works were read and admired by all the world, even by Pagans. They are written in an elevated and majestic style, with great splendor of idea, and vast erudition."

delicate, not rushing in rude and turbid torrents, but swelling up in crystal fountains, and winding in peaceful and silver streams. There no harsh and boisterous winds are permitted to shake and disturb the air, and ravage the beauty of the groves, there prevails no melancholy nor darksome weather, no drowning rain nor pelting hail; no forked lightning, nor rending and resounding thunder; no wintry pinching cold, nor withering and panting summer heat; nor anything else that can give pain or sorrow or annoyance, but all is bland and gentle and serene; a perpetual youth and joy reigns throughout all nature and nothing decays and dies.

The same idea is given by St. Ambrosius, in his book on Paradise,* an author likewise consulted and cited by Columbus. He wrote in the fourth century and his touching eloquence and graceful yet vigorous style insured great popularity to his writing. Many of these opinions are cited by Glanville, usually called Bartholomeus Anglicus, in his work *De Proprietatibus Rerum;* a work with which Columbus was evidently acquainted. It was a species of encyclopedia of the general knowledge current at the time and was likely to recommend itself to a curious and inquiring voyager. This author cites an assertion as made by St. Basilius and St. Ambrosius that the water of the fountain which proceeds from the Garden of

* St. Ambros., *Opera*. Edit. Coignard. Parisiis. MDCXC.

Eden falls into a great lake with such a tremendous noise that the inhabitants of the neighborhood are born deaf; and that from this lake proceed the four chief rivers mentioned in Genesis. *

This passage, however, is not found in the *Hexameron* of either Basilius or Ambrosius, from which it is quoted; neither is it in the oration on Paradise by the former, nor in the letter on the same subject written by Ambrosius to Ambrosius Sabinus. It must be a misquotation by Granville. Columbus, however, appears to have been struck with it, and Las Casas is of opinion that he derived thence his idea that the vast body of fresh water which filled the gulf of La Ballena or Paria, flowed from the fountain of Paradise, though from a remote distance; and that in this gulf, which he supposed in the extreme part of Asia, originated the Nile, the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Ganges, which might be conducted under the land and sea by subterranean channels, to the places where they spring forth on the earth and assume their proper names.

* "Paradisus autem in Oriente, in altissimo monte, de cujus cacumine cadentesaquæ, maximum faciunt lacum, que in suo casu tantum faciunt strepitum et fragorem, quod omnes incolæ, juxta prædictum lacum, nascuntur surdi, ex immoderato sonitu seu fragore sensum auditus in parvulis corrumpente. *Ut dicit Basilius in Hexameron, similiter et Ambros.* Ex illo lacu, velut ex uno fonte, procedunt illa flumina quatuor, Phison, qui et Ganges, Gyon, qui et Nilus dicitur, et Tigris ac Euphrates." Bart. Angl., *de Proprietatibus Rerum*, lib. xv., cap. 112. Francofurti, 1540.

I forbear to enter into various other of the voluminous speculations which have been formed relative to the terrestrial paradise, and perhaps it may be thought that I have already said too much on so fanciful a subject; but to illustrate clearly the character of Columbus, it is necessary to elucidate those veins of thought passing through his mind while considering the singular phenomenon of the unknown regions he was exploring, and which are often but slightly and vaguely developed in his journals and letters. These speculations, likewise, like those concerning fancied islands in the ocean, carry us back to the time, and make us feel the mystery and conjectural charm which reigned over the greatest part of the world, and has since been completely dispelled by modern discovery. Enough has been cited to show, that in his observations concerning the terrestrial paradise, Columbus was not indulging in any fanciful and presumptuous chimeras, the offspring of a heated and disordered brain. However visionary his conjectures may seem, they were all grounded on written opinions held little less than oracular in his day; they will be found on examination to be far exceeded by the speculations and theories of sages held illustrious for their wisdom and erudition in the school and cloister.

No. XXXVI.

WILL OF COLUMBUS.

In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, who inspired me with the idea, and afterwards made it perfectly clear to me, that I could navigate and go to the Indies from Spain, by traversing the ocean westwardly; which I communicated to the King, Don Ferdinand, and to the Queen, Doña Isabella, our sovereigns; and they were pleased to furnish me the necessary equipment of men and ships, and to make me their admiral over the said ocean, in all parts lying to the west of an imaginary line, drawn from pole to pole, a hundred leagues west of the Cape Verd and Azore Islands; also appointing me their viceroy and governor over all continents and islands that I might discover beyond the said line westwardly; with the right of being succeeded in the said offices by my eldest son and his heirs forever; and a grant of the tenth part of all things found in the said jurisdiction; and of all rents and revenues arising from it; and the eighth of all the lands and everything else, together with the salary corresponding to my rank of admiral, viceroy, and governor, and all other emoluments accruing thereto, as is more fully expressed in the title and agreement sanctioned by their highnesses.

And it pleased the Lord Almighty, that in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-two, I should

discover the continent of the Indies and many islands, among them Hispaniola, which the Indians call Ayte, and the Monicongos, Cipango. I then returned to Castile to their highnesses, who approved of my undertaking a second enterprise for further discoveries and settlements ; and the Lord gave me victory over the island of Hispaniola, which extends six hundred leagues, and I conquered it and made it tributary ; and I discovered many islands inhabited by cannibals, and seven hundred to the west of Hispaniola, among which is Jamaica, which we call Santiago ; and three hundred and thirty-three leagues of continent from south to west, besides a hundred and seven to the north, which I discovered in my first voyage, together with many islands, as may more clearly be seen by my letters, memorials, and maritime charts. And as we hope in God that before long a good and great revenue will be derived from the above islands and continent, of which, for the reasons aforesaid, belong to me the tenth and the eighth, with the salaries and emoluments specified above ; and considering that we are mortal, and that it is proper for every one to settle his affairs, and to leave declared to his heirs and successors the property he possesses or may have a right to : Wherefore I have concluded to create an entailed estate (*mayorazgo*) out of the said eighth of the lands, places, and revenues, in the manner which I now proceed to state.

In the first place, I am to be succeeded by Don Diego, my son, who in case of death without children is to be succeeded by my other son Ferdinand ; and should God dispose of him also without leaving children and without my having any other son, then my brother Don Bartholomew is to succeed ; and after him his eldest son ; and if God should dispose of him without heirs, he shall be succeeded by his sons from one to another forever ; or, in the failure of a son, to be succeeded by Don Ferdinand, after the same manner, from son to son, successively ; or in their place by my brothers Bartholomew and Diego. And should it please the Lord that the estate, after having continued for some time in the line of any of the above successors, should stand in need of an immediate and lawful male heir, the succession shall then devolve to the nearest relation, being a man of legitimate birth, bearing the name of Columbus, derived from his father and his ancestors. This entailed estate shall in nowise be inherited by a woman, except in case that no male is to be found, either in this or any other quarter of the world, of my real lineage, whose name, as well as that of his ancestors, shall have always been Columbus. In such an event (which may God forefend), then the female of legitimate birth, most nearly related to the preceding possessor of the estate, shall succeed to it ; and this is to be under the conditions herein stipulated at foot, which

must be understood to extend as well to Don Diego, my son, as to the aforesaid and their heirs, every one of them, to be fulfilled by them; and failing to do so, they are to be deprived of the succession, for not having complied with what shall herein be expressed; and the estate to pass to the person most nearly related to the one who held the right: and the person thus succeeding shall in like manner forfeit the estate, should he also fail to comply with said condition; and another person, the nearest of my lineage, shall succeed, provided he abide by them, so that they may be observed forever in the form prescribed. This forfeiture is not to be incurred for trifling matters, originating in lawsuits, but in important cases, when the glory of God, or my own, or that of my family, may be concerned, which supposes a perfect fulfilment of all the things hereby ordained; all which I recommend to the courts of justice. And I supplicate His Holiness, who now is, and those that may succeed in the holy church, that if it should happen that this my will and testament has need of his holy ordor and command for its fulfilment, that such order be issued in virtue of obedience, and under penalty of excommunication, and that it shall not be in anywise disfigured. And I also pray the King and Queen, our sovereigns, and their eldest-born, Prince Don Juan, our lord, and their successors, for the sake of the services I have done them, and be-

cause it is just, that it may please them not to permit this my will and constitution of my entailed estate to be any way altered, but to leave it in the form and manner which I have ordained, forever, for the greater glory of the Almighty, and that it may be the root and basis of my lineage, and a memento of the services I have rendered their highnesses; that, being born in Genoa, I came over to serve them in Castile, and discovered to the west of Terra Firma, the Indies and small islands before mentioned. I accordingly pray their highnesses to order that this my privilege and testament be held valid, and be executed summarily and without any opposition or demur, according to the letter. I also pray the grandees of the realm and the lords of the council, and all others having administration of justice, to be pleased not to suffer this my will and testament to be of no avail, but to cause it to be fulfilled as by me ordained; it being just that a noble, who has served the King and Queen, and the kingdom, should be respected in the disposition of his estate by will, testament, institution of entail or inheritance, and that the same be not infringed either in whole or in part.

In the first place, my son Don Diego, and all my successors and descendants, as well as my brothers Bartholomew and Diego, shall bear my arms, such as I shall leave them after my days, without inserting anything else in them; and they shall be their seal

to seal withal. Don Diego, my son, or any other who may inherit this estate, on coming into possession of the inheritance, shall sign with the signature which I now make use of, which is an X with an S over it, and an M with a Roman A over it, and over that an S, and then a Greek Y, with an S over it, with its lines and points as is my custom, as may be seen by my signatures of which there are many, and it will be seen by the present one.

He shall only write "the Admiral," whatever other titles the King may have conferred on him. This is to be understood as respects his signature, but not the enumeration of his titles, which he can make at full length if agreeable, only the signature is to be "the Admiral."

The said Don Diego, or any other inheritor of this estate, shall possess the offices of admiral of the ocean, which is to the west of an imaginary line which his highness ordered to be drawn, running from pole to pole a hundred leagues beyond the Azores, and as many more beyond the Cape Verd Islands, over all which I was made, by their order, their admiral of the sea, with all the pre-eminences held by Don Henriques in the admiralty of Castile, and they made me their governor and viceroy perpetually and forever, over all the islands and mainland discovered, or to be discovered, for myself and heirs, as is more fully shown by my treaty and privilege as above mentioned.

Item: The said Don Diego, or any other inheritor of the estate, shall distribute the revenue which it may please our Lord to grant him, in the following manner, under the above penalty.

First—Of the whole income of this estate, now and at all times, and of whatever may be had or collected from it, he shall give the fourth part annually to my brother, Don Bartholomew Columbus, Adelantado of the Indies; and this is to continue till he shall have acquired an income of a million of *maravedis*, for his support, and for the services he has rendered, and will continue to render to this entailed estate; which million he is to receive, as stated, every year, if the said fourth amount to so much, and that he have nothing else; but if he possesses a part or the whole of that amount in rents, that henceforth he shall not enjoy the said million, nor any part of it, except that he shall have in the said fourth part unto the said quantity of a million, if it should amount to so much; and as much as he shall have of revenue beside this fourth part, whatever sum of *maravedis* of known rent from property or perpetual offices, the said quantity of rent or revenue from property or offices shall be discounted; and from the said million shall be reserved whatever marriage portion he may receive with any female he may espouse; so that whatever he may receive in marriage with his wife, no deduction shall be made on that account from said million, but only

for whatever he may acquire, or may have, over and above his wife's dowry, and when it shall please God that he or his heirs and descendants shall derive from their property and offices a revenue of a million arising from rents, neither he nor his heirs shall enjoy any longer anything from the said fourth part of the entailed estate, which shall remain with Don Diego, or whoever may inherit it.

Item: From the revenues of the said estate, or from any other fourth part of it (should its amount be adequate to it), shall be paid every year to my son Ferdinand two millions, till such time as his revenue shall amount to two millions, in the same form and manner as in the case of Bartholomew, who, as well as his heirs, are to have the million or the part that may be wanting.

Item: The said Don Diego or Don Bartholomew shall make out of the said estate, for my brother Diego, such provision as may enable him to live decently, as he is my brother, to whom I assign no particular sum as he has attached himself to the church, and that will be given him which is right: and this to be given him in a mass, and before anything shall have been received by Ferdinand my son, or Bartholomew my brother, or their heirs, and also according to the amount of the income of the estate. And in case of discord, the case is to be referred to two of our relations, or other men of honor; and should they disagree among them-

selves, they will choose a third person as arbitrator, being virtuous and not distrusted by either party.

Item: All this revenue which I bequeath to Bartholomew, to Ferdinand, and to Diego, shall be delivered to and received by them as prescribed under the obligation of being faithful and loyal to Diego, my son, or his heirs, they as well as their children: and should it appear that they, or any of them, had proceeded against him in anything touching his honor, or the prosperity of the family, or of the estate, either in word or deed, whereby might come a scandal and debasement to my family, and a detriment to my estate; in that case, nothing further shall be given to them or him, from that time forward, inasmuch as they are always to be faithful to Diego and to his successors.

Item: As it was my intention, when I first instituted this entailed estate, to dispose, or that my son Diego should dispose for me, of the tenth part of the income in favor of necessitous persons, as a tithe, and in commemoration of the Almighty and Eternal God; and persisting still in this opinion, and hoping that his high Majesty will assist me, and those who may inherit it, in this or the New World, I have resolved that the said tithe shall be paid in the manner following:

First—It is to be understood that the fourth part of the revenue of the estate which I have ordained and

directed to be given to Don Bartholomew, till he have an income of one million, includes the tenth of the whole revenue of the estate; and that as in proportion as the income of my brother Don Bartholomew shall increase, as it has to be discounted from the revenue of the fourth part of the entailed estate, that the said revenue shall be calculated, to know how much the tenth part amounts to; and the part which exceeds what is necessary to make up the million for Don Bartholomew shall be received by such of my family as may most stand in need of it, discounting it from said tenth, if their income do not amount to fifty thousand *maravedis*; and should any of these come to have an income to this amount, such a part shall be awarded them as two persons, chosen for the purpose, may determine along with Don Diego, or his heirs. Thus, it is to be understood that the million which I leave to Don Bartholomew comprehends the tenth of the whole revenue of the estate; which revenue is to be distributed among my nearest and most needy relations in the manner I have directed; and when Don Bartholomew have an income of one million, and that nothing more shall be due to him on account of said fourth part, then, Don Diego my son, or the person who may be in possession of the estate, along with the two other persons which I shall herein point out, shall inspect the accounts, and so direct, that the tenth of the revenue shall still continue to be

paid to the most necessitous members of my family that may be found in this or any other quarter of the world, who shall be diligently sought out; and they are to be paid out of the fourth part from which Don Bartholomew is to derive his million; which sums are to be taken into account, and deducted from the said tenth, which, should it amount to more, the overplus, as it arises from the fourth part, shall be given to the most necessitous person as aforesaid; and should it not be sufficient, that Don Bartholomew shall have it until his own estate goes on increasing, leaving the said million in part or in the whole.

Item: The said Don Diego my son, or whoever may be the inheritor, shall appoint two persons of conscience and authority, and most nearly related to the family, who are to examine the revenue and its amount carefully, and to cause the said tenth to be paid out of the fourth from which Don Bartholomew is to receive his million, to the most necessitated members of my family that may be found here or elsewhere, whom they shall look for diligently upon their consciences; and as it may happen that said Don Diego, or others after him, for reasons which may concern their own welfare, or the credit and support of the estate, may be unwilling to make known the full amount of the income; nevertheless, I charge him, on his conscience, to pay the sum aforesaid; and I charge them, on their souls and consciences, not to

denounce or make it known, except with the consent of Don Diego, or the person that may succeed him; but let the above tithe be paid in the manner I have directed.

Item: In order to avoid all disputes in the choice of the two nearest relations who are to act with Don Diego or his heirs, I hereby elect Don Bartholomew my brother for one, and Don Fernando my son for the other; and when these two shall enter upon the business, they shall choose two other persons among the most trusty, and most nearly related, and these again shall elect two others when it shall be question of commencing the examination; and thus it shall be managed with diligence from one to the other, as well in this as in the other of government, for the service and glory of God, and the benefit of the said entailed estate.

Item: I also enjoin Diego, or any one that may inherit the estate, to have and maintain in the city of Genoa, one person of our lineage to reside there with his wife, and appoint him a sufficient revenue to enable him to live decently, as a person closely connected with the family, of which he is to be the root and basis in that city; from which great good may accrue to him, inasmuch as I was born there, and came from thence.

Item: The said Don Diego, or whoever shall inherit the estate, must remit in bills or in any other way, all

such sums as he may be able to save out of the revenue of the estate, and direct purchases to be made in his name, or that of his heirs, in a stock in the Bank of St. George, which gives an interest of six per cent. and in secure money; and this shall be devoted to the purpose I am about to explain.

Item: As it becomes every man of property to serve God, either personally or by means of his wealth, and as all moneys deposited with St. George are quite safe, and Genoa is a noble city, and powerful by sea, and as at the time that I undertook to set out upon the discovery of the Indies, it was with the intention of supplicating the King and Queen, our lords, that whatever moneys should be derived from the said Indies, should be invested in the conquest of Jerusalem; and as I did so supplicate them; if they do this, it will be well; if not, at all events, the said Diego, or such person as may succeed him in this trust, to collect together all the money he can, and accompany the King our lord, should he go to the conquest of Jerusalem, or else go there himself with all the force he can command; and in pursuing this intention, it will please the Lord to assist towards the accomplishment of the plan; and should he not be able to effect the conquest of the whole, no doubt he will achieve it in part. Let him therefore collect and make a fund of all his wealth in St. George of Genoa, and let it multiply there till such time as it may appear to him that some-

thing of consequence may be effected as respects the project on Jerusalem: for I believe that when their highnesses shall see that this is contemplated, they will wish to realize it themselves, or will afford him, as their servant and vassal, the means of doing it for them.

Item: I charge my son Diego and my descendants, especially whoever may inherit this estate, which consists, as aforesaid, of the tenth of whatsoever may be had or found in the Indies, and the eighth part of the lands and rents, all which, together with my rights and emoluments as admiral, viceroy, and governor, amount to more than twenty-five per cent.; I say, that I require of him to employ all this revenue, as well as his person and all the means in his power, in well and faithfully serving and supporting their highnesses, or their successors, even to the loss of life and property; since it was their highnesses, next to God, who first gave me the means of getting and achieving this property, although it is true, I came over to these realms to invite them to the enterprise, and that a long time elapsed before any provision was made for carrying it into execution; which, however, is not surprising, as this was an undertaking of which all the world was ignorant, and no one had any faith in it; wherefore I am by so much the more indebted to them, as well as because they have since also much favored and promoted me.

Item: I also require of Diego, or whomsoever may be in possession of the estate, that in the case of any schism taking place in the church of God, or that any person of whatever class or condition should attempt to despoil it of its property and honors, they hasten to offer at the feet of His Holiness, that is, if they are not heretics (which God forbid!) their persons, power, and wealth, for the purpose of suppressing such schism, and preventing any spoliation of the honor and property of the Church.

Item: I command the said Diego, or whoever may possess the said estate, to labor and strive for the honor, welfare, and aggrandizement of the city of Genoa, and to make use of all his power and means in defending and enhancing the good and credit of that republic, in all things not contrary to the service of the church of God, or the high dignity of our King and Queen, our Lords, and their successors.

Item: The said Diego, or whoever may possess or succeed to the estate, out of the fourth part of the whole revenue, from which, as aforesaid, is to be taken the tenth, when Don Bartholomew or his heirs shall have saved the two millions, or part of them, and when the time shall come of making a distribution among our relations, shall apply and invest the said tenth in providing marriages for such daughters of our lineage as may require it, and in doing all the good in their power.

Item : When a suitable time shall arrive, he shall order a church to be built in the island of Hispaniola, and in the most convenient spot, to be called Santa Maria de la Concepcion ; to which is to be annexed an hospital, upon the best possible plan, like those of Italy and Castile, and a chapel erected to say mass in for the good of my soul, and those of my ancestors and successors with great devotion, since no doubt it will please the Lord to give us a sufficient revenue for this and the aforementioned purposes.

Item : I also order Diego my son, or whomsoever may inherit after him, to spare no pains in having and maintaining in the island of Hispaniola, four good professors of theology, to the end and aim of their studying and laboring to convert to our holy faith the inhabitants of the Indies; and in proportion as, by God's will, the revenue of the estate shall increase, in the same degree shall the number of teachers and devout increase, who are to strive to make Christians of the natives ; in attaining which no expense should be thought too great. And in commemoration of all that I hereby ordain, and of the foregoing, a monument of marble shall be erected in the said church of La Concepcion, in the most conspicuous place, to serve as a record of what I here enjoin on the said Diego, as well as to other persons who may look upon it ; which marble shall contain an inscription to the same effect.

Item: I also require of Diego my son, and whomsoever may succeed him in the estate, that every time, and as often as he confesses, he first show this obligation, or a copy of it, to the confessor, praying him to read it through, that he may be enabled to enquire respecting its fulfilment; from which will redound great good and happiness to his soul.

S.
S. A. S.
X. M. Y.
EL ALMIRANTE.

No. XXXVII.

SIGNATURE OF COLUMBUS

As everything respecting Columbus is full of interest, his signature has been a matter of some discussion. It partook of the pedantic and bigoted character of the age, and perhaps of the peculiar man who, considering himself mysteriously elected and set apart from among men for certain great purposes, adopted a correspondent formality and solemnity in all his concerns. His signature was as follows:

S.
S. A. S.
Y. M. Y.
XPO FERENS.

The first half of the signature, XPO (for CHRISTO), is in Greek letters; the second, FERENS, is in Latin. Such was the usage of those days; and even at present both Greek and Roman letters are used in signatures and inscriptions in Spain.

The ciphers or initials above the signature are supposed to represent a pious ejaculation. To read them one must begin with the lower letters, and connect with those above. Signor Gio. Batista Spotorno conjectures them to mean either Xristus (Christus) Sancta Maria, Yosephus, or, Salve me, Xristus, Maria, Josephus. *The North American Review*, for April, 1827, suggests the substitution of Jesus for Josephus, but the suggestion of Spotorno is most probably correct, as a common Spanish ejaculation is "Jesus, Maria, y José."

It was an ancient usage in Spain, and it has not entirely gone by, to accompany the signature with some words of religious purport. One object of this practice was to show the writer to be a Christian. This was of some importance in a country in which Jews and Mahometans were proscribed and persecuted.

Don Fernando, son to Columbus, says that his father, when he took his pen in hand, usually commenced by writing "Jesus cum Maria sit nobis in via": and the book which the Admiral prepared and sent to the sovereigns, containing the prophecies which he considered as referring to his discoveries,

and to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre, begins with the same words. This practice is akin to that of placing the initials of pious words above his signature, and give great probability to the mode in which they have been deciphered.

NOTE.

An account of a visit to Palos by Washington Irving will be found as an appendix at the end of the first volume.

No. XXXVIII.

MANIFESTO OF ALONSO DE OJEDA.

THE following curious formula, composed by learned divines in Spain, was first read aloud by the friars in the train of Alonso de Ojeda, as a prelude to his attack on the savages of Carthagena, and was subsequently adopted by the Spanish discoverers in general, in their invasions of Indian countries :

"I, Alonso de Ojeda, servant of the high and mighty kings of Castile and Leon, civilizers of barbarous nations, their messenger and captain, notify and make known to you, in the best way I can, that God our Lord, one and eternal, created the heavens and earth, and one man and one woman, from whom you, and we, and all the people of the earth, were and are descendants, procreated, and all those who shall come after us; but the vast number of generations which have proceeded from them in the course of more than five thousand years that have elapsed since the creation of the world, made it necessary that some of the human race should disperse in one direction, and some in another, and that they should divide themselves into many kingdoms and provinces, as they could not sustain and preserve themselves in one alone. All these people were given in charge, by God our Lord, to one person, named Saint Peter, who was thus made lord and superior of all the people of the earth, and head of the whole human lineage; whom all should obey, wherever they might live, and whatever might be their law, sect, or belief: he gave him also the whole world for his service and jurisdiction; and though he desired that he should establish his chair in Rome, as a place most convenient for governing the world, yet he permitted that he might establish his chair in any other part of the world, and judge and govern all the nations, Christians, Moors, Jews, Gen-

tiles, and whatever other sect or belief might be. This person was denominated Pope, that is to say, Admirable, Supreme Father and Guardian, because he is father and governor of all mankind. This holy father was obeyed and honored as lord, king, and superior of the universe, by those who lived in his time, and, in like manner, have been obeyed and honored all those who have been elected to the pontificate; and thus it has continued unto the present day, and will continue until the end of the world.

"One of these pontiffs, of whom I have spoken, as lord of the world, made a donation of these islands and continents of the ocean sea, and all that they contain, to the Catholic kings of Castile, who, at that time, were Ferdinand and Isabella, of glorious memory, and to their successors, our sovereigns, according to the tenor of certain papers, drawn up for the purpose (which you may see, if you desire). Thus his majesty is king and sovereign of these islands and continents by virtue of the said donation, and, as king and sovereign, certain islands, and almost all, to whom this has been notified, have received his majesty, and have obeyed and served, and do actually serve him. And, moreover, like good subjects, and with good will, and without any resistance or delay, the moment they were informed of the foregoing, they obeyed all the religious men sent among them to preach and teach our holy faith; and these of their free and cheerful will,

without any condition or reward, became Christians, and continue so to be. And his majesty received them kindly and benignantly, and ordered that they should be treated like his other subjects and vassals. You also are required and obliged to do the same. Therefore, in the best manner I can, I pray and entreat you, that you consider well what I have said, and that you take whatever time is reasonable to understand and deliberate upon it, and that you recognize the Church for sovereign and superior of the universal world, and the supreme pontiff, called Pope, in her name, and his majesty, in his place, as superior and sovereign king of the islands and Terra Firma by virtue of said donation; and that you consent that these religious fathers declare and preach to you the foregoing: and if you shall so do, you will do well, and will do that to which you are bounden and obliged; and his majesty, and I, in his name, will receive you with all due love and charity, and will leave you your wives and children free from servitude, that you may freely do with them and with yourselves whatever you please and think proper, as have done the inhabitants of the other islands. And, besides this, his majesty will give you many privileges and exemptions, and grant you many favors. If you do not do this, or wickedly and intentionally delay to do so, I certify to you that, by the aid of God, I will forcibly invade and make war upon you in all parts and modes that I can, and will

subdue you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and his majesty ; and I will take your wives and children, and make slaves of them, and sell them as such, and dispose of them as his majesty may command : and I will take your effects, and will do you all the harm and injury in my power, as vassals who will not obey or receive their sovereign, and who resist and oppose him. And I protest that the deaths and disasters, which may in this manner be occasioned, will be the fault of yourselves, and not of his majesty, nor of me, nor of these cavaliers who accompany me. And of what I here tell you, and require of you, I call upon the notary here present to give me his signed testimonial."

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